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“The unfolding of the moral discernment under an ever-increasing intelligence is a work which still remains to be done. In view of the incompleteness of this work at any given point, a person may very well say of his life and practice, ‘Sanctified up to knowledge.’”—DANIEL STEELE, D.D. (*Milestone Papers*, p. 134.)

“Regeneration is, . . . in the strictest sense, a past event. But sanctification is not so positively a past event. It is a continuous process. It began with regeneration, but it was not then completed. It is something that never becomes a past experience. . . . It is a work to be repeated, and which is repeated again and again during probational life; and, as each succeeding sanctification brings the soul into nearer fellowship with the all-cleansing blood, the experience of sanctification is justly regarded as progressive.”—BISHOP S. M. MERRILL. (*Aspects of Christian Experience*, pp. 190, 193.)

“It [a certain treatise on regeneration referred to by Wesley] all along speaks of regeneration as a progressive work, carried on in the soul by slow degrees from the time of our first turning to God. This is undeniably true of sanctification; but of regeneration, the new birth, it is not true. This is a part of sanctification, not the whole; it is the gate to it, the entrance into it. When we are born again, then our sanctification, our inward and outward holiness, begins; and thenceforward we are gradually to ‘grow up in Him who is our Head.’ . . . A child is born of God in a short time, if not in a moment. But it is by slow degrees that he afterward grows up to the measure of the full stature of Christ.”—JOHN WESLEY. (*Sermons*, vol. i, p. 406.)

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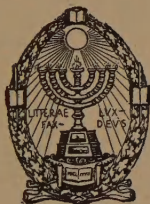
GROWTH IN HOLINESS
TOWARD PERFECTION
OR PROGRESSIVE . . .
SANCTIFICATION . . .

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1988

BY

Rev. James Mudge, D.D. 1844-1918

Author of "Faber," "Pastor's Missionary Manual," "Handbook of
Methodism," etc.



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GROWTH IN HOLINESS.

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary.

SO many are the volumes treating of the theme to which this book relates that whoever purposes to perpetrate another instinctively feels that some sort of an apology is due. He knows that people not a few will exclaim: "Why more talk? We have had a surfeit of discussion and speculation. What we need is better practice, not more elaborate and fine-spun theories." Large numbers, also, of devout souls will make haste to declare: "We are perfectly satisfied with the doctrine of the fathers. Modern teachers cannot understand the Bible better than did John Wesley. His *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* clearly answers all questions. It has stood the test of a century and a quarter. Let us be content with it and have done with further theologizing, which can only be a thrashing out of old straw."

There is force in this suggestion. And yet there is certainly another side for which something can be said. Dr. Daniel Steele, who

has been one of the most prolific and useful of recent writers on this theme, expresses the opinion that "all systematizers have hitherto failed to construct out of the Bible and experience a consistent and symmetrical science of Christian perfection." Dr. D. D. Whedon said in the *Methodist Quarterly Review*, as long ago as January, 1871, "So rapid, during even the last ten years, has been the progress of thought upon the very fundamentals of theology, . . . that our whole body of divinity needs reconstruction." Many testimonies similar to this could be quoted. They embody our own emphatic belief. We yield to no man in admiration for John Wesley and the grand work he did, not only by his unrivaled administrative ability and tireless evangelistic labors, but by his vigorous, fearless thinking and his valuable contributions to theology. Nevertheless, it is too much to claim that he exhausted the possibilities of discovery in all doctrinal directions and fathomed or explored all the oceans of truth. It is not given to any one man, however able, to do this. We do not reflect at all upon Wesley when we say that his investigations in this field left something still to be desired. He himself, it seems to us, would have been the first to admit it. He did not set up to be a pope. He did not demand

or expect from all who, in the main, should follow him a slavish adherence to his every form of expression. He certainly did not himself make the mistake of turning back more than a century into the past to find, in the views of some distinguished man, an adamant mold in which to cast his own opinions and those of his posterity. He departed widely from the views of his ancestors on many points, venturing out boldly on the sea of knowledge and making discoveries that were a great blessing to his own soul and a benediction to us. We do not think he would have been disposed to deny us the same privilege.

But, however that may be, we are of those who deem it a duty to use our own minds. Nor do we consider that all wisdom died when the fathers fell asleep. It seems to us that their descendants, even if inferior in original ability (which is by no means proved), standing on their shoulders and having in many respects better opportunities, may see further than did they. The human intellect has not lain dormant for a hundred years. Theology is a progressive science, not stereotyped or sterile. Certainly, a century of experience, observation, and investigation must have yielded some beneficent results. And restatements of truth, in language closely adapted to the

present age, are surely called for from time to time. No age can compare with our own in the amount of study that has been put upon the Scripture and in the variety of lights from many sources that have been made to converge upon its pages. The ancient languages are better understood than they used to be. The principles of correct exegesis are more thoroughly comprehended. A sounder philosophy is in vogue. And if modern teachers do not understand the Bible any better than did the ancients, then they are utterly unworthy to be the descendants of the fathers, which we do not believe.

We hold that there should be the largest freedom in nonessentials, and that no cry of "heretic" or "unsound in the faith" should be raised because some preacher has too much respect for his own mind to put fetters on his processes of thought or content himself with repeating certain shibboleths. It seems to us the height of the absurd to demand, under penalty of excommunication, that we should not advance a single inch beyond where the founders of Methodism stopped in the musty past. In our Saviour's day there were some who held very rigidly to "the traditions of the elders" and substituted the "precepts of men" for the "commandments of God." He con-

demned their course in severest terms and did his utmost to emancipate the minds of his followers. So did St. Paul, declaring that, though in malice babes, in mind we were to be men, and that it is our business to prove all things, that we may hold fast only the good. It is still our duty to stand firm in the intellectual liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and refuse to thrust our necks under any yokes of bondage. They who spend their time in building and adorning the sepulchers of the prophets, praising their greatness, and declaring that no such men ever lived before, or ever can live again, on the earth, are the very ones who, had they been alive in the ancient days, would have stoned the prophets for daring to be prophets and thus making an advance on what was previously taught.

Wesley is not to be blamed because he did not strike out at a blow, or even with many repeated blows, a perfectly consistent and satisfactory theory of Christian perfection, one that is at the same time scriptural, reasonable, harmonious with itself in all its parts, and inclusive of all the facts of experience. The difficulties in his way were very great and are not always sufficiently considered. He groped eagerly for the light; but the fog was thick about him, and he never quite emerged. He experimented, now

with this form of words, now with that, modifying his modes of expression ever and anon in the earnest endeavor to reach something solidly conclusive; but he never did, and it is no real detraction from his fame to make the admission. He trod a comparatively untried path, and it is not to be wondered at if his steps were somewhat crooked. Whoever has critically examined that miscellaneous compend of essays, tracts, hymns, reflections, and conversations, produced at various times from 1725 to 1777 and never thoroughly revised, called the *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, must have been impressed with the fact that it was a work of development, and must have discovered many evidences of considerable change of views, so much so that on some points it is not possible to tell what Wesley really held. And other passages scattered through the sermons can in no way be reconciled with some of the deliverances of this book.

The fact is that he and his colaborers were not in a position to do full justice to the theme. They were in the thick of a heavy fight with most provoking antagonists, and could not always maintain the serene composure necessary for alluring truth from her deep well. They were also surrounded by a mass

of very ignorant followers, whose crude, unreliable, indiscriminating testimonies on the subject they felt bound to accept in lieu of anything better, and to whose rudimentary comprehension they felt bound to adapt their teaching. That they did so well under all the circumstances is matter of marvel. But for us to do no better, with all our superior advantages, would be disgraceful. We do more honor to the memory of Wesley by imbibing his spirit of freedom than by conforming absolutely to the letter of his writings. Since so long as he lived he continued to perfect his theories and, also, to vary their modes of expression, nothing can be surer than that, if he lived at the present time, when such great changes have been made in the language of theology and philosophy, he would modify many of his statements very considerably. It is better to hold what there is every reason to suppose Wesley would hold were he now living than what he held more than a century ago. They have no right to consider themselves legitimate followers or sons of the great founder who, conscious of their own mental weakness and averse to laborious inquiry, indeed, having no opinions that can properly be called their own, merely repeat certain formulas parrotlike and brand as error

all departures from them. This is not true Wesleyanism or Methodism, however loudly it may be trumpeted as such, or however close the outward resemblance may be.

As will be inferred from the previous paragraphs, we are of those who think that a fresh putting of the doctrine of Christian perfection is decidedly called for. Everybody knows that there is at present great diversity of opinion on this subject among Methodists. But this extensive lack of agreement is, after all, more in appearance than in reality. It pertains not so much to the essential substance of the doctrine, as to its terminology. Its nomenclature never was scientifically formulated. And the demand for such a treatment, it is safe to say, is very much greater now than it was three or four generations ago. For this is peculiarly a scientific age. People are being trained, as never before, to observe with minutest accuracy and to make statements that exactly fit the facts. Vague guesswork and slipshod methods are not allowed to pass. Theologians, as well as physicists, are held to strict account for their language and are expected not to deviate, by so much as a hair's-breadth, from the precise truth.

In Wesley's day a far less close watch was kept for inaccuracies in verbiage. Methodist

authors, in their carefulness to cling to Wesley's skirts, and in their timidity about departing, ever so little, from his language, have not kept up with the times. They have followed one another with the utmost closeness, chiefly anxious, it would seem, not to be accused of heterodoxy, and so never stopping to inquire whether the terms they used were the best ones or were used in scriptural and rational meanings.

For example, Wesley himself says, in his *Plain Account*: "We grant . . . that the term 'sanctified' is continually applied by St. Paul to all that were justified; that by this term he rarely, if ever, means 'saved from all sin;' that, consequently, it is not proper to use it in that sense, without adding the word 'wholly,' 'entirely,' or the like." (P. 51.) But everyone familiar with his works knows that in his subsequent writings he paid no attention to this distinction, but violated the rule almost continually, thus inextricably confusing all his readers and leading them inevitably to suppose that no one could be sanctified unless he was entirely sanctified. And Methodist writers, without exception, so far as we are aware, have followed him in this inexcusable practice. Simpson's *Cyclopedia of Methodism*, under the heading "Sanctification," says, and

with truth, "The term is used interchangeably in the Methodist Church for holiness and Christian perfection." Under the heading "Perfection" it adds: "This state is also expressed in Scripture by the words 'holiness,' 'sanctification,' 'purity,' 'perfect love,' 'fullness of God, and of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost,' and 'full assurance of faith.' In addition to these, the words 'entire sanctification,' 'higher life,' 'rest of faith,' and 'full salvation' are used by Christians to express the same idea." A distinguished writer in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* not long ago, near the beginning of an article on entire sanctification, said: "In writing and speaking on this subject we are accustomed, as a Church, to use the words 'entire sanctification,' 'holiness,' 'purity of heart,' 'perfection,' or 'perfect love,' as referring to the same state of experience."

Evidently to these men, and those for whom they speak, one word seems as good as another for all practical or theoretical purposes, and any attempt at nice discrimination or definition would be considered entirely out of place. Indeed, one of the most pretentious of our modern authorities expressly says, in the preface to his volume of 472 pages: "I have not adopted the rigid and frigid style of writers on systematic divinity. I have not aimed to be

specially critical." Such has been the almost universal spirit in which the theme of the highest possibilities of grace has been taken up. It has been thought that glow and fervor and eloquent exhortation were the main thing, and anything like nice and curious inquiry into words, in a theme so warmly spiritual, would be decidedly out of place. Hence, language has been employed by these men with a looseness that has made it utterly impossible to tell what were their real sentiments on a number of fundamental points, since what they said at one time, strictly interpreted according to the generally recognized laws of expression, was far from harmonizing with what they said at another. This kind of writing did fairly well for an age when men disdained to follow any rules in spelling, but used their liberty and put down their own name in half a dozen different ways, just as the fancy took them. But for the present age such freedom will scarcely answer. Its evils have become so glaring that people of even moderate education or intelligence are beginning to pause and inquire if there is not some better way.

We believe there is, and that it should be adopted. The importance of definitions is coming to be better and better understood, and the demand for them in all cases where

clear thought is required is waxing louder. Bishop Foster, in his *Philosophy of Christian Experience* (pp. 8, 9), has well said: "Definition must include all that is essential to the object defined . . . and exclude everything else. If more is put into the definition than is included in the thing defined the object is not before the mind, but some other object—a distortion. The included error may be such as to be utterly misleading and involve fatal misdirection . . . Truth is exact; and to reach it the utmost possible precision is necessary in the use of significant terms, never more so than in a discussion like the present." Dean Stanley, in a most valuable address to the students of St. Andrew's some years ago, gave as one of the main grounds of hope in theological progress "the increasing consciousness of the importance of definition." He quoted Cardinal Newman as saying, "Without definition controversy is either hopeless or useless." He also mentioned a learned Scotchman's sagacious remark that "the vehemence of controversy has been chiefly in proportion to the emptiness of the phrases used." All history illustrates and enforces this truth. Very similarly, the Rev. Dr. Spring, of Newburyport, once said that the younger President Edwards was the ablest man in conversational debate he had

ever known ; that even with the strongest debaters he would end a discussion almost at once, often in a few words silencing the most confident opposer. When Dr. Spring's son, to whom the remark was made, asked how it was done, what was the secret of this remarkable success, the reply was, " He made his opponent define his terms, and then held him to his definitions." That this was also the secret of Socrates's great power in conversational debate all readers of Plato's dialogues will readily recall.

It cannot have escaped the notice of those who have read the principal works that are standard among us on the subject of Christian perfection that scarce any of them gives much attention to the matter of definition or takes pains, even after defining a word, to use it uniformly in that sense. Nothing is more common, for instance, than the word " sin " in all this discussion. But it is almost never defined, in spite of the fact that it has a number of distinct significations ; and, even when defined, it is almost never consistently employed. Here, again, we must quote Wesley, as having set an example in the latter of these two faults which has been but too obsequiously or recklessly followed throughout the century. In his famous sermon " On Perfection," written in

1785, he says: "Why should any man of reason and religion be either afraid of or averse to salvation from all sin? . . . By sin I mean a voluntary transgression of a known law." By a perfect Christian, then, according to this, he would mean simply one who does not voluntarily transgress a known law. But all readers of his works know that he very frequently teaches in them that all believers, as soon as they are justified, are so far saved that they do not voluntarily transgress any known law, but live without condemnation. In many sermons, among which the first, tenth, and nineteenth may be mentioned, he greatly emphasizes the words of John, "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin," saying, "By sin I here understand outward sin, according to the plain, common acceptation of the word, an actual, voluntary transgression of the law, of the revealed, written law of God, of any commandment of God, acknowledged to be such at the time that it is transgressed." (*Sermons*, vol. i, p. 164.) Should we not be justified from these two quotations, as well as from others that might be given, in saying that Wesley believed that all the regenerate were also scripturally perfect? Yet, of course, this would not fairly represent the position which he takes in the greater part of his writings.

He very frequently uses the word "sin" with quite another and far deeper meaning, as will be seen from the words already quoted that the term "sanctified" is not, by itself, equivalent to "saved from all sin."

Another illustration, out of a great multitude easily accessible, of the ambiguity and confusion that has arisen from the lack of careful definition and scrupulous, self-consistent use of language, is found in the fact that Wesley says (*Sermons*, vol. i, p. 358): "Christian perfection . . . is only another name for holiness. They are two names for the same thing. Thus, everyone that is holy is, in the Scripture sense, perfect." But on page 113 of the same volume he says, "Every babe in Christ is holy." He does not mean, however, as might naturally be inferred from this, that every babe in Christ is perfect, for he says in another place (vol. i, p. 110), commenting on 1 Cor. iii, 1, "Every believer is, in a degree, carnal while he is only a babe in Christ;" and in his *Plain Account* he repeatedly speaks of "the sanctified" as "adults" and "fathers in Christ."

These verbal contradictions admit of explanation and excuse in Wesley's case, because he wrote and spoke at such different times, under such different circumstances, at periods fifty years apart; and never set himself to the

difficult task of revising and harmonizing the whole for transmission to posterity. He was a pioneer, dealing with what may be called a new subject and obliged to rely on a mass of testimony that could not readily be sifted, and that subsequently was proved to be far less trustworthy than he had supposed. He did much, more than any other one man, to make the matter understood and popularly effective; but no one man, even though a Wesley, could possibly do, under such very unfavorable conditions, what some of his unwise eulogists of the present day are disposed to claim for him. No one man could so formulate the doctrine, in all the *minutiæ* of its terminology and all the intricacies of its philosophical statement, as that nothing should be left for other generations to accomplish in the way of amendment or completion. There is still need for thinking on this theme. And the writers of our own day, who have not had Wesley's difficulties of composition and utterance to contend against, who have been able to embody their mature thought in a single well-considered treatise, are in no way justifiable for contenting themselves with repeating and defending Wesley's inaccurate statements.

This little book is not designed primarily for polemics; neither will it be occupied largely

with hortations. Some influence, it is to be hoped, will emanate from it such as may help to produce the highest style of Christian living. For this, after all, is the ultimate end which all good people are seeking—to make out of nominal Christians real Christians, to bring the professed followers of Jesus to a sense of their deficiencies, and to stir them to take immediate steps to have all their wants supplied. But it has seemed to us that, before direct persuasions could properly or effectively be applied, there was a deeper work to be done. Something lies back of incitement. It is instruction. Unless people know clearly and definitely just what it is they can obtain, it is of comparatively little use to press them to make endeavor. Hence, our chief effort will be to free the subject from the mass of ambiguities that have gathered around it, and to eliminate as many as possible of the fallacies that have become fixtures in its ordinary discussion. These lurk in ambush at every step and hide behind the most innocent-looking bushes. Were they once cleared away and fully expelled from the whole territory, there would be good hope that even the simple-minded and defenseless pilgrim could make his way in safety to the land of Beulah.

It may be thought that he can do so now, and that it is only the warrior who gets

into trouble; in other words, that the questions with which this volume will be largely occupied are more nice and curious than practical and profitable, and that the average Christian will get more harm than good by meddling with them. We do not believe it. Our firm conviction is that error of any kind, however minute, even though for the time it may seem harmless or positively beneficial, will inevitably do damage, and that in the long run only truth is safe. It seems to us that this has been most amply illustrated in the subject under consideration. The doctrinal errors of the so-called "holiness" or, as it is sometimes termed, "the second blessing" movement, which will be distinctly pointed out in the course of this treatise, we hold to be directly responsible for the many evils which have, in practice, attended its course among the churches, and which all good men most sincerely deplore.

Among these evils may be briefly mentioned the tendency to schism, to censoriousness, and to the perversion of Scripture. It is well known that large numbers who have become involved in this movement have separated themselves from the Church, some in body, and some simply in spirit; in the latter case retaining their membership, but

refusing to cooperate with the authorities, being, indeed, thoroughly estranged from the ministry, whom they look upon as greatly inferior to themselves in piety and illumination. They segregate themselves from the rest of God's children with a special shibboleth, of which they are very tenacious, with special meetings, special leaders, and special literature, being thus to a very large degree a divisive, disturbing, and disloyal element, by which the pastor is continually hampered if, in the exercise of his godly judgment, he finds himself unable to fall in with their narrow methods and peculiar ways. The harsh judgments that are constantly meted out by some of the most prominent leaders of this party or faction to those who differ from them in opinion might easily be illustrated by liberal quotations from current publications and from standard volumes; but the task is a very unpleasant one, and we are unwilling to call any more prominent and permanent attention than is really necessary to these glaring weaknesses and evident departures from perfect love of so many who claim to possess it. Especially to be deplored is the continual tendency, which, indeed, the theory itself makes a practical necessity, to depreciate the work of grace wrought in the soul at

the time of conversion. The "merely justified" are spoken of in a tone which smacks of pity and sometimes savors of contempt. They are practically denied any portion in or title to the precious words "holy" and "holiness" with which the Bible is filled. They are regarded as given over to sin as a matter of course, until a further work has been wrought upon them.

But worst of all, in our opinion, are the wholly indefensible and unwarrantable perversions of Scripture to which the special advocates of this theory find themselves driven and in which they unrestrainedly indulge. The utmost violence is continually done both to the text and to the context, in the interests of the doctrine under consideration, examples of which by the dozen will occur to all who have any familiarity with this kind of literature and any acquaintance with the recognized principles of interpretation. Dr. Curry said, in the *Methodist Review* for January, 1885: "They have a peculiar dialect; and words and phrases as used by them have come to have special and somewhat technical significations. 'Sanctification,' and 'holiness,' and many like terms, that in Holy Scripture and in general religious discourse are used to designate the ordinary

fruits of the Spirit in believers, are narrowed down so as to indicate only a specific and ultimate work of grace." If the word of God is to be thus deceitfully handled by those professing greatest reverence for it, what safeguards of doctrine or defense against the wildest vagaries remain? Anything whatever, no matter how unreasonable, can be proved from Scripture if the methods used by most of the writers on this theme are to be justified.

If it be said that these evils are inherent in human nature and are not peculiar to or dependent on any form of doctrine, this may be admitted in part. But it does not do away with our persuasion that the remaining part of the mischief, a very large part in many cases, is directly owing to the fact that the pure and perfect truth has not been adhered to. In spite of all seeming gains and temporary advantages and widely heralded results, the total outcome of anything that savors of the false will be found to be essentially flawed and distinctly below what would have been wrought had the false thing not been touched. "By their fruits ye shall know them" is a good rule; but considerable time is necessary for its complete application.

This book will not be chiefly a conglomerate of quotations compiled from previous works

which are accounted standard. This, we know, is a frequent and favorite way of constructing such a volume. It is the custom to transfer bodily scores of paragraphs or pages from Wesley's *Plain Account*, and other such authorities, which is, indeed, a saving of thought and an avoidance of responsibility. But it seems to us that this extreme caution to tread exactly in the footsteps of those who have gone before, and this anxiety above all things to be accounted orthodox, however admirable in point of humility, are unworthy of truth seekers and not quite fair to the men of the present day, who want fresh food. Why should a new book be written if there is nothing new to be said? Great names on which to lean, as a kind of prop to one's own weakness, are exceedingly useful, and it is becoming to be modest; but, after all, if one has anything like a mandate from on high and feels a "Thus saith the Lord" reverberating in his soul, why should he not speak out what God has given him in a straightforward way, trusting that it will find an echo in other hearts and commend itself as true to other minds? The book will be smaller for not being padded with long extracts, and it will be more genuinely a fresh contribution to the needs of the hour than if it

were simply a rehash of what has been already written.

We shall do our best to avoid another pit into which falling is easy. To one who is at all disputatious and who thinks he sees clearly the fallacies of his predecessors, the temptation is strong to fill dozens of pages with an exposure of these errors, going into the *minutiæ* of controversy and showing up, without mercy, *ad libitum*, if not *ad nauseam*, the strange mistakes which men both good and great will sometimes perpetrate. This course, while excellent as a mental gymnastic and, to a slight degree, occasionally necessary by way of clearing the ground, does not minister to much profit or get the traveler on a great way in his journey. A positive presentation of the theme is much better than a negative one. We shall hope to enunciate so clearly and establish so firmly the principles we deem to be true, that he who comes into possession of them will be able for himself to detect the sophistries he may meet and demolish all structures of error.

Every endeavor will be made to keep clear of ambiguity, and of those familiar figures of speech under which authors have frequently succeeded in covering up, from themselves and their readers, the real indefiniteness of

their ideas. The technical language of theological systems which have come down from past generations often serves but to conceal poverty of understanding. Much of such technical language has really outlived its usefulness, and there is no reason why it should be retained. A set of well-worn phrases, from which the original inscriptions have been all rubbed off, is too often largely made to do duty instead of newly stamped coins fresh from the mint of thought. Metaphors and similes need to be sharply looked into; for they often lead the mind far astray and completely cover up the literal meaning. Naturalness—all cant expressions rigidly excluded—is of incalculable worth in religious communications. If we can really get behind the word to the thing signified and set it forth in a simple, common sense way that shall be intelligible to the average reader, we are persuaded that a genuine service will have been performed.

This, of course, will be very difficult; and it is probable we shall only partly succeed in what we planned. There are those who flatly say it cannot be done. Several writers we have noticed who deny the possibility of defining, for instance, such a word as "depravity." Dr. Miner Raymond, in his *Syste-*

matic Theology (vol. ii, p. 383), says: "We do not attempt what we regard as impossible, namely, a definite designation of that in which Christian perfection consists." Bishop Foster, in the revised part of his volume on *Christian Purity* (pp. 117, 118), addressing himself with utmost carefulness to the task of showing just what entire sanctification is, confesses that "the subject is one of manifold difficulty, and about which there is great confusedness of thought. I find evidences of obscurity in all the writings about it. The most eminent divines are not clear. . . . Possibly it belongs to that class of occult subjects which refuse to be brought into the categories of clear thought." Possibly it does; but in our opinion a large part of the trouble has been that those who have attempted the solution of the problem have approached it from the wrong standpoint. They deemed it absolutely essential that they should depart in no degree from the phrases of the fathers, lest their orthodoxy be impeached; and, being thus hampered by the necessities of strictly conforming to a preconceived system, they have been unable to work out anything satisfactory or consistent. To him who will venture to swing clear at this point the path is much more open and the result much more gratifying.

If, then, the reader of these pages shall find, in some matters of nomenclature especially, a considerable departure from that to which he is accustomed, let him not be alarmed, as though grave heresy or some other equally serious crime had been committed. The time has come, we think, for a change in certain of our popular statements. The system of philosophy and ethics at present accepted imperatively demands it. Our terminology, so far as the doctrine of Christian perfection is concerned, is in a state anything but creditable to us as a denomination. No theologian can view the condition of things with complacency or equanimity. The chief reason why there is so little unanimity among us, and why the subject is avoided by such large numbers of our ministry and membership, is that they instinctively feel that it has been muddled by a vast number of words without knowledge; and they wait for some presentation that shall be plain. The minds of the people never can become properly established on the subject, so long as the chief writers content themselves with echoing what was said more than a century ago and what has proved itself unsuited to bring about harmony.

That harmony is broken by contentions which are almost wholly about words. In the

things themselves we are persuaded there is very general agreement. Hence, the demand of the hour is preeminently for a different set of words, that shall not admit of such a variety of discordant meanings and shall not so inevitably provoke strife. It may be impossible to find such words ; but we do not yet despair. It ought to be within the compass of human skill ; if not, no clear thought on this subject is attainable.

The present writer does not expect to satisfy everybody or present a perfect solution of the problem. But he hopes to contribute a little toward that solution and make, perhaps, a trifle lighter the labors of that master mind which is to come and set all things in order. At least, it seemed good to him, forasmuch as so many others had taken in hand to give forth their thoughts concerning these matters, and forasmuch as the subject had been to him for thirty years one of peculiar fascination, to try if perchance the Lord might work some deliverance for Israel even through his pen. He makes no pretense to infallibility or canonical inspiration. Ever advancing light may cause him hereafter to modify some of the details of the statements he now makes. But of the essential truth of the positions taken he has no doubt, since the reflection,

experience, and observation of a lifetime are behind them.

The pages that follow will certainly not suit everybody. They will not suit those, for example, who do not care or dare to exercise their own minds, but prefer to have all their thinking done for them by the appointed guards of right doctrine. Nor will they find any use for this book who substitute emotion for intelligence and consider that the Holy Spirit is all the teacher about spiritual things that any person needs. For, of course, if one has only to kneel in prayer before an open Bible to have every doctrine touched upon therein made perfectly plain in all its parts to his untutored understanding, it would be labor lost to study and time thrown away to go to school. For the few, rather than for the many, the succeeding chapters have been prepared; that is, for those interested in clear statements and careful definitions, for those who like philosophy, and are pleased to see a great doctrine set out in such shape that its several elements shall harmonize and its relation to other doctrines shall be adequately shown.

We trust that those who read this little volume will find it free from harshness and undue dogmatism, especially from that dogmatism which worships terms and excommu-

nicates with merciless rigor whoever dissents from its declarations. We trust that its spirit will commend itself to the devout reader as one of Christian love, tending to uplift and help. And we ask that those who feel obliged to oppose the positions here taken may do us the justice to sincerely endeavor, at least, to understand them, quoting our exact words if quoting any, and giving us credit for an honest purpose to promote the glory of God and the welfare of the Church.

Thus we commit our labor to the care of the Master, solicitous only that his truth may be maintained, wishing that our qualifications for the difficult task attempted were more adequate, but laying them all, such as they are, gladly at the Saviour's feet.

CHAPTER II.

Sin and Depravity.

"GROWTH in Holiness toward Perfection, or Progressive Sanctification," has been set down as the general title of this book. Under this comprehensive heading an effort will be made to harmonize, as has not been hitherto done, the essential elements of Methodist doctrine, the universal facts of Christian experience, the latest results of modern philosophy, and the clear teachings of Scripture. We propose to examine the highest privileges of Christian attainment and the deepest rules of Christian obligation. We shall discuss principles, we shall evolve precepts, we shall proffer counsels. It will be our aim to consider frankly and fundamentally all the important phases of this subject, which so closely concerns both the general Church and the individual believer. And it is our hope that, when the survey is ended, the intelligent reader, who has carefully followed the argument throughout will feel that he has a better grasp of the theme than heretofore and is,

also, more fully fitted to make rapid progress in spiritual things.

It will be seen from the previous chapter that we regard it as a primary part of our work, absolutely essential to any clear comprehension of the matter under treatment, to strip of ambiguity the leading terms involved in the discussion and to institute a pretty radical departure in the nomenclature of the subject. We have long held that if this could only be effectually done very little of difficulty would remain, and that until this was done no amount of words would afford much profit. Evidently, then, the first thing on hand is to grapple with the fundamental subject of *sin*; for here, most of all, has uncertainty of meaning prevailed, and here, first of all, must reform begin. The nature of the disease must be thoroughly looked into before the cure can most profitably be taken up.

Nearly all writers use "sin" in a variety of senses; and, as they cannot or do not stop to give notice when they pass from one meaning to another, the confusion is very great and the appearances of contradiction are abundant. Sometimes, they mean the deliberate doing of what is known to be wrong. And with this idea in mind they assert strongly that no Christian, while remaining a Christian, can pos-

sibly commit sin ; which is, of course, a truism, of the same character as the statements that no honest man steals, no truthful man lies. Sometimes, the thought behind the word is not a deliberate, open-eyed violation of right or neglect of plain duty, but a more or less voluntary transgression of a more or less dimly apprehended law. Still again, the meaning may be simply an infraction of the divine law or a coming short of its full perfection, without reference to knowledge on our part or power to do differently. Or, yet again, the word may be employed to designate a state or condition of soul, in this sense indicating dissimilarity of nature from God's nature, as when we are said to be born in sin or possessed by sin.

It must be clear to all that the implications and associations of these various meanings are such as to make them, to all intents and purposes, different words ; but, being spelled in the same way, because of this identity of dress they pass themselves off as the same person, and the complications that follow are very bewildering. The trouble would be somewhat mitigated if, in connection with the generic word "sin," a qualifying adjective was always employed to indicate in which of these meanings it was to be understood. But no complete

set of convenient adjectives has been found available, nor are those always used which might be. The inevitable tendency is to save labor by taking it for granted that the reader will understand what the writer has in mind, with the natural result that the utmost uncertainty and perplexity prevail.-

Furthermore, this vagueness is sure to affect, more or less largely, the writer's own mental processes. It is practically impossible for him who has become accustomed to use the word, now with one meaning, now with another, to keep from considerable intellectual entanglement and embarrassment. He is sure to mystify himself, as well as his readers. He will inevitably carry along with him, in his use of the word in its third or fourth meaning, affiliations which belong exclusively to the first or second. The word itself, instead of being a docile servant of his thought, has become to some degree his master, and drives him whither he would not otherwise have gone.

If we talk of some sins which are innocent and some which are guilty, some which require repentance and some which do not, some which can be committed without any sense of condemnation or any need of forgiveness and some of an opposite character, some which need atonement and some which have no such

need, some which are our fault and some which are only our misfortune, some which are in no way compatible with love and some which are, some which have the participation of our will and some which do not, some which involve no violation of any law that we are under and some which do, some which are the result of inevitable ignorance and some which imply knowledge, it is easy to see that it will be entirely impossible to free the subject from continual misapprehensions and the greatest disorder. We believe there is a far better way, and that the word "sin" should be restricted to one leading sense—that sense which it everywhere has in the popular mind. And if, for any special purpose, there has to be at any time a temporary departure from this meaning it should be carefully noted, and attention called to the fact that a figurative or accommodated sense of the word is being used.

What, then, is sin, strictly so called? Sin is deviation from duty; choosing our own will, instead of the divine will; disobeying that law which is binding upon us as a rule of present action. These are slightly varying statements of the same thing, diverse in form, but practically identical in substance. They are framed to emphasize the idea that sin is

always the responsible act of a free moral agent, who has sufficient opportunity for knowing what is commanded him. It is not simply the missing of a mark which it would have been well for him to hit, but the missing of it, because he did not take the pains which he might have done in rightly directing his aim, and, hence, a missing of what he ought to have hit. This definition draws a distinct line between faults and misfortunes, between what we can help and what we cannot help, between culpable sins and unavoidable infirmities. Guilt, blameworthiness, ill-desert are accounted inseparable concomitants or adjuncts of sin. Sin, and sin alone, is considered to be the subject of atonement, repentance, and forgiveness. All true sin resolves itself into selfishness, putting self in the place of God. All discerned selfishness is sin.

Can we say that all lawlessness is sin? A proper answer to this question is impossible, without a very careful examination of the subject of law. There is no topic which has given writers on Christian perfection more trouble than this, none in the proper setting forth of which they have made more manifest failures. Even John Wesley, in his *Plain Account*, if he does not really contradict himself, certainly gives plausible ground for such

a charge. He leaves the subject in a mist and fails to supply any means for its clearing up.

There has been much debating as to whether he held that the law of God which is binding upon us is different from that which was given to Adam, or not. He seems, in some places, to say that it has been lowered in its demands and adapted to our changed circumstances; that, since we are no longer able to keep the original law, another has been given to us much easier to live up to; and, hence, that we can be sinless, that is, keep the whole law we are now under, even though at many points we break the original law. In other places, he seems to say just the contrary, holding that love fulfills the whole of the original or perfect moral law, declaring in so many words: "The best of men need Christ as their priest, their atonement, their advocate with the Father; not only as the continuance of their every blessing depends on his death and intercession, but on account of their coming short of the law of love. For every man living does so." (*Plain Account*, p. 113.) And again: "The most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions." (*Plain Account*, p. 64.) In his sermons he uses this language: "Every part of this law must remain in force

upon all mankind and in all ages, as not depending either on time or place, or any other circumstances liable to change, but on the nature of God and the nature of man and their unchangeable relation to each other." (Vol. i, p. 222.) There is certainly an ambiguity here which ought to be removed; for nothing can be more fundamental to the whole theme. Since sin is nothing more nor less than disobedience, not to some law made for superior beings or for human beings in a superior sphere, but to the law which rests with full force upon us here and now, with our present powers and capacities, there must be a settlement as to what that law is before any intelligent assertion is possible as to whether or not we are daily committing sin.

We have read very widely in Methodist authors without finding any satisfactory or conclusive setting forth of this subject. Their treatment of it, as a rule, partakes of the same hesitancy and two-sidedness that characterizes Wesley's. With few exceptions, they see quite clearly that it will not do to declare a lowering of the claims of the original law. The moral law is a transcript of the divine mind; and, hence, God could as easily change his own immutable nature as lower the standard of obedience. If he could lower the

standard of obedience he could have released man from all obligation to keep the law and so have saved the trouble of the atonement. Moral laws are in themselves universally obligatory and quite as unalterable as the laws of nature. The perfect law under which Adam was originally placed remains in full force. Things which were wrong in his day are not right now, and things which were right then are not wrong now. The principles of rectitude are not dependent upon the divine volition in such a sense as to be liable to repeal or change. They have their subsistence in the divine nature. They are coexistent and coeternal with Deity. Any change in them implies a change in the nature of God himself.

Dr. Adam Clarke, in his sermon on "Life, the Gift of the Gospel," says: "It would be shockingly absurd to suppose, that when man, through his own fault, sinned against his God and fell from his perfection, that God must then bring down his law to a level with his sinful imperfection, that he might not by transgression incur further penalty. The thought, seriously indulged, is blasphemy. A law thus framed could be no expression of the divine mind, could not have his sanction, and could be no rule of moral action." (*Works*, vol. v, p. 200.)

Richard Watson (*Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 456) speaks of "that absolute obedience and service which the law of God, never bent or lowered to human weakness, demands from all."

Dr. Pope (*Higher Catechism*, p. 273) says: "Methodist doctrine teaches . . . not the lowering of the law."

Dr. Wilbur Fisk, in his sermon on "Salvation by Faith," calls it "a preposterous idea that the moral law is repealed, and that the Gospel which has been substituted for it is a less rigorous rule of life, accommodated down to man's weak and sinful nature." And he adds: "Shall the law be changed? It was perfect at the first, and any change would make it imperfect. A less perfect law God could not prescribe." (Quoted in Caldwell's *Christian Perfection*, pp. 44, 100.)

Bishop Foster, in his *Philosophy of Christian Experience* (p. 136), says: "The regenerate soul is still held strictly under the law of righteousness. The grace which, through the atonement and by faith, has secured to it forgiveness for sins that are past does not modify or change its relations to immutable ethical law. . . . To its utmost demand the law is forever binding upon the forgiven, as much as upon the unforgiven, soul. . . . That law holds over it with unabated force."

Bishop J. T. Peck says, in his *Central Idea of Christianity* (p. 178): "The law . . . can, hence, never be repealed or modified. . . . Its demands are based upon the principles of eternal and unchangeable rectitude and adapted to man, not as he is, but as he ought to be. It is the rule with which every fact of his character and of his life must be compared—not a flexible, accommodating rule, suited to his ever-changing moral condition and capacity, but a rule of exact righteousness."

Bishop S. M. Merrill, in his *Aspects of Christian Experience* (p. 241), says: "There has been no repeal or modification of the law, no lowering of the claim of God, no readjustment of probational tests that implies a compromise with unrighteousness."

All this seems undeniable. But it can only be counted a part of the truth after all; for equally strong statements that appear to take an entirely contrary view can be quoted in abundance from standard Methodist writers.

John Fletcher, in his *Last Check to Antinomianism*, says: "We shall not be judged by that law [of paradisiacal obedience], but by a law adapted to our present state and circumstances, a milder law, called the law of Christ. . . . Our heavenly Father never expects of us,

in our debilitated state, the obedience of immortal Adam in paradise."

Dr. George Peck (*Christian Perfection*, abridged, pp. 148, 151) says: "The difference between the original law of perfect purity and the law of love, as incorporated in the Gospel, is this: one is an expression of the divine will concerning beings perfectly pure, in the full possession of all their original capabilities; but the other is an expression of the divine will concerning fallen beings restored to a state of probation by the mediation of Christ. Each alike requires the exercise of all the capabilities of the subjects; but the subjects being in different circumstances and differing in the amount of their capabilities, the standard of obedience is, from the necessity of the case, varied. . . . The standard of character set up in the Gospel must be such as is practicable by man, fallen as he is. Coming up to this standard is what we call Christian perfection."

Dr. Daniel Steele, in his *Milestone Papers* (pp. 20, 31, 44, 127), says: "The Adamic law has been replaced by the evangelical requirement of love as the fulfilling of the law. . . . This law is graciously adapted to our diminished moral capacity, dwarfed and crippled by original and actual sin. . . . This law [of perfect obedience given to Adam in Eden] no man

on earth can keep, since sin has impaired the powers of universal humanity. . . . All that I am required to do is to love God with the full measure of my present powers, crippled and dwarfed by original and actual sin."

All this also appears sensible ; for justice requires that all demands upon us should in every case be strictly corresponding to our capabilities, that obligations should not go beyond opportunities, and that duties should keep even pace with powers. We cannot be accounted blameworthy for anything which it is impossible for us to do ; nor are we at fault for failing to keep a law which was adapted to the condition of beings possessing abilities utterly beyond our reach.

This apparent clashing of authorities—for there is nothing in the context of the passages above quoted to modify their force or correct their one-sidedness—shows the need of a more comprehensive and discriminating statement, that shall relieve the subject of its difficulties. "Lowering or changing the law" is an ambiguous expression which should be avoided, for it means different things and, while true in one sense, is untrue in another. Hence, persons may range themselves on both sides of it with as much violence and as little profit as did the ancient knights with the gold and silver shield.

It is perfectly plain that mere weakness or disability self-procured does not destroy or reduce moral obligation ; for if it did the drunkard might plead his drunkenness in abrogation of all punishment for his crimes. And Satan would be under almost infinitely less obligation to love God than is Gabriel. Indeed, the further any being advances in sin the less of service would be due from him to his Maker. On the other hand, it is equally plain that the disability which has come upon a person through somebody else's fault may righteously be urged in mitigation of the claims upon him. No government would demand of one who was a helpless cripple from birth or congenitally blind regular military service. Where much is given, much is required ; where little is given, little is required.

The law is lowered, so far as regards its claims upon us personally in our present enfeeblement as compared with Adam, that enfeeblement being in part, at least, not our own fault. In other words, the conditions of salvation and the formulas of duty have most certainly been changed. Adam may, in one sense, be said to have been saved by works, in that his works—although, of course, not dis severed from faith in God, but springing from it—held a different relation to his salva-

tion from that which works can do now. They were complete and all-sufficient, needing no such piecing out from another source as do ours. Nondeviating obedience to the perfect law was required of him, because it was possible to him; and, of course, nothing less than what was possible could be accepted. With us, this flawless obedience from the cradle to the grave is not possible; and to exact it from us as a condition of salvation would be glaring injustice. God could not have permitted the race to continue after Adam's fall without making some adequate provision whereby the requirements of his law could still be met, and yet man be required to do only that of which he was capable. By bringing us into the world in our impaired state he made the atonement essential, if the law was to be maintained.

The law, then, by this arrangement, is maintained, and lowered in no degree, so far as regards its availability as a standard of right, by which men can measure their progress, estimate their position, and decide where they are on the scale of perfection. It continues to fulfill this function without change. It remains to stimulate, humiliate, and guide, to mark man's declension, to deepen his sense of unworthiness, and to serve as the directing

goal of his aspirations. But Christ, with whom we link ourselves by faith, now satisfies those demands of the law which are beyond our present powers, making up our deficiency, so far as that deficiency is an absolute necessity of our crippled state. And we are in this sense "free from the law," that is, free from any obligation to fulfill its highest demands—demands equitable for angels and for what we may suppose man to have been in his pristine estate, but not equitable for us who inherit so much impairment.

Thus, the rule or standard of duty has for us been changed from what it was for our first parents. The standard of absolute right, the ideal standard, is the same for us as for Adam and the angels, is the same the wide universe through. In other words, there are certain acts or courses of conduct which are according to the mind of God and for the highest well-being of creation. They are such as God himself would do, and which he must of necessity be best pleased to have done by others. These actions are said to have rightness, or conformity to the ideal. And in this sense every action, no matter how small, has a moral quality, has a certain measure of conformity or disconformity to the standard of absolute right, the law of well-being, the unchanging law of God.

But whether or not a person comes into fault for failing in any point to reach this standard wholly depends on whether or not it was within his reach. The moral character of the actor is decided by his intention. The moral quality of the action is decided by its consequences. While actions are right or wrong, persons alone can be innocent or guilty, holy or sinful. This distinction is one of the utmost consequence, for if properly observed it would carry a torch through much of the darkness that has enshrouded the whole subject of Christian perfection.

There is such a thing as morally perfect conduct. Vile deeds can be done with good intentions. There are those, Christ tells us, who think that they are doing a service unto God when they are engaged in killing God's children. God has a will, or law, or pleasure, with reference to actions as well as persons. The former is unchangeable, like any of the other laws of God or nature, like the law of gravitation or chemical affinity or mechanics, because founded in the nature of things, that is, in the nature of God. Whatever things are once right are always right, just as a substance which is heavy in the first century is heavy in the twentieth century. The principles which govern the welfare of the universe are ever the

same, and in the same circumstances the same course must be taken, the same decision made. To vary from it would be to take something less good, less perfect, less in accordance with highest well-being. To satisfy the law, that is, to satisfy the ethical nature of God, his sense of what is just and right and beautiful and good, one set of actions, and only one, must be forthcoming. But God's will with reference to persons does change, because their circumstances change, because their ability to carry out the ideal programme becomes greatly altered. When a man's power to do the absolute right is taken away, not through his own fault, then the demand upon him for that absolute right is also taken away. This every instinct of fair play demands.

Hence, it will readily be seen how a declaration that the law has been altered or lowered might seem a shocking blasphemy and a preposterous absurdity to one man, who fixed his mind on the former meaning, while to another, who had the latter meaning in his thought, the denial that the law could be lowered to meet our altered, enfeebled powers would seem blasphemous, because inconsistent with divine justice.

The law under which we now are, that is, the perfect keeping of which is incumbent

upon us, is sometimes called the law of faith, as distinguished from the law of works; not to intimate that we are absolved from doing all the work we possibly can, but to show that by faith in the Saviour we present him and his works of perfect righteousness as our substitute, in place of that perfect obedience to the law which we are not able to render. For the same reason, it is called the law of Christ and the law of liberty. It is, also, sometimes called the law of love, because love with all our present powers, accompanied, of course, by those works to which love will naturally and inevitably prompt, gives us full acceptance with God. But this term is very liable to mislead, and should be used with caution. It cannot be safely or suitably put in opposition to the Adamic law, for that, too, was a law of love, in that it required from Adam that he should love God with all his powers; mere works, without love, would in no way have met the divine requirements. Love fulfills every law, in so far as it is fulfilled at all, because it furnishes the needed power or incentive for its fulfillment. It was so with Adam, just as much as it is with us. The law of faith would seem to be a less exceptionable term, in that we are saved by grace through faith, both initial and final,

with no more works than such as are within the compass of our present powers and such as will inevitably flow from a living faith.

We are now in a better position, it may be hoped, than we were before this discussion, to say precisely what transgressions of law can be properly called sins. We restrict the name to transgressions of that law which is binding upon us now as a code of personal duty; for in reference to no other things can we feel remorse or beg forgiveness. A breach of the Adamic law involves no blame, because we have no power to keep it and cannot intelligibly or fitly ask pardon for what we could not possibly help. Infractions of the Adamic law are infirmities, which we regret and which we strive to make as few as possible, but which we shall never wholly rid ourselves of while in the flesh. They are inseparable from humanity in its fallen condition, inevitable concomitants of a more or less diseased body and a more or less fallible and enfeebled mind.

We regret these infirmities, these mental and physical defects leading to errors in conduct, these failures to reach the ideal standard of perfect righteousness and flawless beauty of character, because we are thus compelled to present to the eyes of our divine Friend a less pleasant sight than we would like to do and

are more or less hampered in our powers of usefulness. It must be somewhat painful to God to see any of the effects of sin. He cannot look with perfect satisfaction on any of the works of the devil, any of the results of the fall. He cannot take supreme delight in a marred universe. He can be perfectly pleased only with real rectitude, in distinction from that conduct which is no more than rightly intended. A man of low mentality, small sympathy, and dense ignorance, a dolt, a dunce, a boor, an imbecile, a savage, however good his intentions, can have but little likeness to Christ and little loveliness of life or genuine usefulness. He cannot be an ideal Christian or a model of moral and spiritual development. We should not think of looking to him for a standard of behavior such as we would wish our children to imitate, nor could we ourselves take much delight in his society. Such a person may mean well. His purpose may win our cordial approval, may win praise from the divine Judge who looks at the heart; while the outcome may be very disagreeable, and the work which he meritoriously attempted may be utterly spoiled. He may be entirely innocent whose conduct, because of unavoidable deficiencies in his mental or physical makeup, is far from immaculate.

There is a real, or material, rectitude, grounded in the nature of God, which is permanent and has objective entity independent of all personal considerations. With reference to this, it may be said that right is right and wrong is wrong under all circumstances, irrespective of conditions and without reference to the varying powers of the persons who do the deeds. But there is also a rightness of form, which is entirely subjective and dependent wholly on the will or motive of the agent. If this distinction, a familiar one in ethics, be kept firmly in mind, it will readily be seen that a thing may be right so far as the actor is concerned, right for him, because of his inability to do better, but not right at all tried by God's absolute standard—the well-being of the universe and the good of all. A man may be in right volitional relations who is not altogether in right ethical or rational relations. His mistakes may be condoned, because of his inevitable ignorance; but his deeds are not to be justified as having been best or anything else than mistakes. He may have done the best he knew; but his knowledge may have been so very small that great harm resulted. He may have followed his convictions of duty, sincerely thinking he was doing service acceptable to God, and thus be

free from condemnation for what he did; while, at the same time, he entirely misconceived what was in the mind of God, and the absolutely right service was not done.

An act may be wrong in itself, while the person who has done it is in no way guilty, needs no forgiveness, has committed no sin. Sin is a guilty transgression of law, such a transgression as the transgressor knew he could, and, therefore, should, have avoided. Only these guilty, responsible transgressions of law can properly be called sins. Innocent or unintentional or unavoidable transgressions are not sins, but simply infirmities. What are commonly called involuntary transgressions as a matter of fact generally involve minute volitions, escaping from us because of moral weakness. If so, they are not simply infirmities, but sins, although they may be termed small and comparatively unimportant sins. To make a defect culpable it must be a coming short of the possible, not merely a coming short of the ideal.

Of course, it is one thing to make this distinction in theory, and quite another to make it correctly in practice. There is no doubt but that great multitudes are softly calling by the more pleasant name of infirmities and mistakes what are really sins. The latter is a

plain, blunt word, which does not fit in well with certain much-lauded theories and high-sounding professions ; but if it be the word which the facts call for, as it is not difficult to show, then in all honesty let it be used, no matter what becomes of the theories.

It is a duty to be always formally or intentionally right and to have just as much of material or absolute righteousness as possible. It is our business to come as near to the ideal each moment as may be within our power. It is a sin to fail to keep as perfectly as we might the perfect law ; also, to fail to press forward with the utmost possible rapidity toward the goal of entire freedom from depravity. If, through greater concentration of purpose, more steadfast attention, keener watchfulness, and closer application of mind to the presence of God—all no doubt within the compass of our powers—we might have escaped making a certain blunder, then is that blunder more or less blameworthy, and we cannot wipe our mouths complacently and say we have not sinned for such and such a length of time. Avoidable errors in judgment, due to lack of perfect watchfulness or lack of attainable information, are sins requiring repentance and forgiveness. Ignorance must not be made a cloak for carelessness. Ignorance is often blameworthy ; and the same

may be said of conceit, obstinacy, and fanaticism. It is sin to live, even for a moment, below our privileges and the highest possibilities of grace in our particular case. It is a sin to have been, at any point, less useful than we might, or to have made less progress in divine things than light and opportunity warranted. It is a sin to have our tendencies toward sin, at any point or in any way, stronger than they need to be. It is sin to lose any opportunity of doing a kindly act, to omit any beneficent deed which we could have accomplished. It is sin to be actuated, in any degree, by improper motives. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

Hence, for the holiest to pray daily, "Lord, forgive me my trespasses," is eminently fit, since no one but God can surely determine whether trespasses or, in other words, sins have been that day committed. Who can be sure that his peace is as deep and his love as strong all through the day as it might and should be? Who can measure the utmost capability of his spirit for love to God and man, and be sure that that capability is completely filled, be sure that there is no deficiency in the ardor or purity of his affection? Who is able to penetrate all the unseen depths and secret places of

his soul? That a person is conscious of no transgressions counts for but little. No one is a proper judge in his own case. We need to be as profoundly impressed with this fact as with the other corresponding fact, that we are unfit to judge other people. Very suitably and wisely does Paul say: "I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall each man have his praise from God." *

In the light of the truths now enunciated it will, we trust, be fully seen how unphilosophical, inaccurate, and every way objectionable is the antiquated phrase "original sin." It is quite time that this misbegotten and utterly misleading term, together with its partners, "birth sin" and "inbred sin," was dismissed to the museum of theological curiosities, where alone at present it belongs. Some plead for it because it is sanctioned by extensive usage and by many great names, being even incorporated in one of our articles of religion, as well as receiving countenance from some of the figurative expressions employed by that great

* I Cor. iv, 4, 5, Revised Version, as always in this book.

theologian, St. Paul. But we firmly believe that when a technical term has outlived its usefulness it ought to be laid on the shelf and replaced by something better. Why, simply because of attachment to that which is old, or, in other words, moss-grown conservatism, should we hold on to that which continually and inevitably deceives? Surely our language is not so poverty-stricken as to make this a necessity. Words should be our servants, not our masters, to be changed at will when they have ceased to do for us what they were intended or what they are bidden to do. The evil that has come from permitting this dead phrase still to walk the earth, as though alive, is unquestionably very great. We have read whole volumes of Methodist literature that were made very nearly useless because the authors plainly showed themselves ignorant of the fact that the only original sin was the sin of Adam, and that all sin consists of sinning. Whole chapters and entire arguments have been fatally flawed by the implication that there can be sin which is not the outcome of man's own choice, and that men are guilty for that which has come upon them by no exercise of their own wills. Theology would be immensely the gainer if we never heard more of original or inbred sin.

But, of course, we must carefully retain that portion of truth which has lain behind the delusive phrase. What word will best convey that truth? There is but one which fits the case, and that seems all sufficient. We mean "depravity." We do not understand why such numbers of theologians fight so shy of defining depravity. In most cases they decline attempting it, sometimes writing hundreds of pages on the subject without once giving a clear and formal definition. And even when appealed to to supply the omission we have known them to refuse or evade the request. Bishop Jesse T. Peck, indeed, says, in his *Central Idea of Christianity* (pp. 74, 390), "This [namely, in what depravity consists] is an inquiry prohibited by the laws of our being," and "It is not necessary, nor is it possible, to define this depravity in words." We are quite unable to see why it should be deemed impossible. Nor do we think there is any special difficulty in the matter, except that which arises in some cases from an unwillingness to follow out to a logical conclusion the train of thought which the word naturally suggests, lest damage should come to some pet dogma, and positions which have been accounted orthodox should be shown to be without adequate foundation.

What, then, is depravity? It may be stated in a variety of ways, all, perhaps, equally good; but we prefer the following: depravity is that abnormal or disordered condition of human nature whereby we are no longer in harmony with God or with ourselves, as we were originally made, but have so strong a leaning toward self-indulgence that we are easily brought into disobedience to the divine commands. Other elements might be introduced into the definition, but they would needlessly complicate it, and convert it, perhaps, into a descriptive disquisition. We have given all that seems to us essential. The main point is the bias or tendency to sin, not itself sin, since it involves no guilt, but taking its rise in the sin of our first parents and leading to sin, that is, making its commission unduly easy. It has close connection with sin, both in its source and in its effect; but it is no more fitting on this account to call it sin than it would be to call coal heat, because it is the result of heat in the past and produces heat in the present or future. If coal were thus denominated heat it would be readily recognized as a metaphorical or poetical use of the word and might be harmlessly indulged for a while; but if, after a season, the figure of speech began to be taken literally by many, with mischievous practical

effects, common sense would dictate that the usage, however time-honored, should give way to something less injurious, and coal be called coal and heat heat. So we deem it full time that sin be called sin and depravity depravity, and that dangerous personifications and rhetorical flights of fancy on this critical theme be no longer indulged.

“Depravity” seems to us the one word most suitable to cover all the results entailed upon human nature by the primary or original sin of our first parents in the garden of Eden. What are those results? Man, as first made in the image of his Maker, we are accustomed to idealize, perhaps somewhat too freely. No doubt, many writers have ascribed to him powers and perfections for whose existence there is no special ground. Nevertheless, we cannot be wrong in picturing him as possessing very great excellencies indeed. He came fresh from the hands of his Creator, fully equipped, physically, intellectually, and morally, for his life work, and was pronounced very good. He was not, of course, without limitations, was not infinite in knowledge nor in anything else; but he must have possessed endowments of a very high order, must have been flawless, as well as innocent. He was without disease and without essential defects,

a man in capacity, though still a child in experience and acquisition. All the elements of his nature were duly balanced and worked together in undisturbed harmony, the lower being subordinate to the higher. There was no schism, but perfect peace and equilibrium prevailed. Reason and conscience were uppermost. The will held in easy control all the susceptibilities and propensities, the appetites and passions. The bias of his being was toward God. He was in the kingdom of God by his birthright, and maintained continual communion with God.

He might have gone on to be, what Jesus Christ actually became, perfect in all his moral development. But he chose otherwise. Being placed upon probation, that is, subjected to trial for testing and maturing his spiritual strength, he fell into temptation and committed sin. He abused his freedom, perverting this great gift of God and preferring the gratification of his own desires to obeying the will of his Creator and fulfilling the purposes of his creation. What followed? The making of this fatal choice necessarily disturbed the delicate balance between his higher and lower nature, casting a weight into the wrong scale. No new faculty or principle or power or element was introduced; but the old ele-

ments were sadly disarranged. The love of God no longer ruled. Self-love, which was good, became turned into selfishness, which is bad. The animal propensities, gaining by undue indulgence a strength not designed for them, maintained successful rebellion against the conscience. Man listened to their voice when he should have listened to the voice of his Lord, and the bias toward holiness was more and more transformed into a bias toward sin. The passions and appetites obtained a predominance which they did not before possess and were not entitled to have. Powerful tendencies to evil, that is, to the undue gratification of self, became developed and, following the regular law of natural descent whereby like begets like, became hereditary and waxed greater with succeeding generations. Sin followed sin, habits became fixed, and a perverted, corrupt nature—sometimes termed filthiness, or moral defilement, of both flesh and spirit—was transmitted from sire to son.

Hence, men come into the world to-day with a bias or tendency to sin, or to that self-gratification which is sure to eventuate in sin. We inherit a germ of evil, which develops rapidly, and mightily moves us toward disobedience. Every infant is thus affected by the sin of Adam, and comes into existence with this dis-

arranged system, these disordered faculties, which we call a depraved nature. But only a perverted ingenuity and the exigencies of a false theological system could have driven men to speak of the little ones as born in sin or born under the wrath of God. That is a fiction largely due to the wrong nomenclature to which we have referred above, a fiction which has grown increasingly distasteful to the modern mind, until it has now become very generally rejected, disowned, indeed, by all who have emancipated themselves from the thralldom of these hideous monstrosities of mediæval theology.

But, though infants are not born sinners, they are born depraved, in the sense just indicated. And this truth must be firmly held. Their inherited organization, rudimentary and germinal as, of course, it is, is such that, when fully developed, they are very liable and, in fact, morally certain to commit sin. Before the dawn of moral responsibility they can have no moral character. But a moral nature, that is, a latent capacity for moral character, a constitution that, when more mature, will lay hold of moral distinctions and make moral choices, must be ascribed to them. And this moral nature, while certainly not sinful, is just as certainly wrong or wrung or twisted, so that it

will inevitably show a bent toward sin as soon as the opportunity arises. It is a misfortune for the child to possess this nature, but not its fault. Fault, or desert of punishment, arises as soon as the child, arriving at years of accountability, voluntarily yields to the pressure of this tendency and transgresses some known commandment of God or dictate of right. It is not the presence of the appetencies and impulses inciting to evil which brings condemnation, but either a deliberate cherishing of the incitement or a failure to make effort for the removal of the presence after conviction has been wrought that it may and should be removed.

Some inherit very much more depravity than others, because coming of a worse stock; their immediate ancestors, by their own personal wickedness having largely increased their own depravity, have necessarily passed on these greatly strengthened tendencies to their posterity. But even from the best of ancestors, as explained just below, some depravity seems to be entailed. This, though not necessitating or causing sin, yet, taken in conjunction with our evil surroundings, leads to it and becomes the occasion of sin; and so the race grows up, a race of sinners needing regeneration before they are fitted to enter the kingdom of God.

Our position, that all depravity cannot be absolutely removed in this life, that it takes resurrection power to restore the full image of God in us, that not till glorification is our renewal in the divine likeness completed, will be fully discussed in another chapter. But this seems a fit place for calling attention to the auxiliary or corroborative fact—we consider it a fact—that all infants, without exception, even the offspring of the most eminent and mature Christians, are born depraved. How this can be if the parents in some cases are wholly free from depravity, that is, how parents can transmit something which they do not themselves possess, has considerably puzzled such Wesleyan theologians as have seen fit to notice it.

Wesley himself takes it up and tries to find a solution by asserting, "Sin is entailed upon me, not by immediate generation, but by my first parent" (*Plain Account*, p. 75). But, since nothing is plainer than that it can only come from the first parent through the last parent by immediate generation, this explanation totally fails to explain and can be considered only an evasion. Adam can reach us in no other way than through our father and mother. Dr. Miley, in his *Systematic Theology* (vol. i, p. 507), similarly evades the point by saying: "The regenerate or sanctified state is

specially a gracious state, and not of the original constitution of man. It is provided for in the economy of redemption, and achieved through the supernatural generation of the Holy Spirit, and therefore is not transmissible through natural generation." This would apply if the question concerned the transmission of moral character wrought out by personal choice, combined with the operation of the Holy Spirit. Personal merit or demerit, innocence or guilt, is, of course, not transmissible. But whatever nature or state we have, however it originated or was superinduced, whether by the good Spirit or the evil spirit, can be and must be transmitted. Natural generation must pass on a nature, whatever it be, a good nature as quickly as a bad nature, a predisposition to righteousness as quickly as a predisposition to sinfulness. The modifications effected by spiritual forces, since they are deeply wrought into the very tissues of our being, are just as transmissible as any other. It is a wonderful help to be born of deeply pious parents. If an ungracious state—for such depravity may fitly be called—can be transmitted, why not a gracious state? And if an ungracious state does not, in any particular or to any degree, exist it certainly cannot be transmitted. The only sufficient and satisfactory reason that we

have been able to find, why no child is begotten or born without some degree of depravity, is that there are no parents wholly free from it. We believe no other reason would be sought for or thought of except at the imperative demand of an erroneous theory; erroneous in terminology, we mean, rather than in substance.

It is important to note that there is only one kind of depravity, just as there is only one kind of holiness. It may exist in different degrees; it may have different sources and applications. It is sometimes spoken of under two heads. That depravity which descends to us, under the law of heredity, from our ancestors, beginning with Adam, is styled entailed depravity; and that addition which we have made to it, as the result of our personal evil choices, is styled acquired depravity. It is important to recognize these diverse origins, because they concern our responsibility; but the depravity, after all, is one in its nature and operation, though it may flow from two or more original fountains. The appetite for intoxicating liquor which holds the drunkard in bondage is, nearly always, in part hereditary and in part acquired. But as it exists practically it is a single undivided appetite, in which no separation or division can be made; and everyone would recognize it as the height of

absurdity to talk about that part of his appetite which had been inherited being destroyed by some kind of a cure, while the part which he had himself produced remained. So the sinner's bent toward sin has been greatly strengthened by his own wicked life; but it is wholly unphilosophical, as well as unscriptural, to undertake to separate between what came from his parents and what he has added. It must be treated as a unit, for such it is.

In the same way, a mistake is made when moral and physical depravity are spoken of as though they were two distinct and separate things, one of which could be removed without disturbing the other. It is too often forgotten by theorizers that, however convenient it may be for theoretical purposes to divide man into various departments, practically he is a unit. Body and mind or, to use Paul's phraseology, "spirit, soul, and body" make one man. Depravity affects the whole of him. It is, in Dr. Whedon's language, "a racial impairment." One part cannot be impaired without involving all parts. One part cannot be perfectly repaired unless all are. The disorders and disabilities brought upon the body and the mind by the fall are as essential a component part of depravity as the disarrangement of the moral and spiritual relations. All parts are so

closely intertwined and inseparably interlocked that each inevitably affects the other. This is easily understood and freely admitted when the distinction between depravity and sin is kept clearly in mind and no responsibility is imputed for what we cannot help.

It should, still further, be observed, that a state of depravity is by no means the same as a state of sin, or sinfulness. The latter carries the thought of responsible ill-desert and guilt. Infants are in a state of depravity, but cannot be in a state of sinfulness or sin-guiltiness. Sinwardness is a much less objectionable term for depravity; and yet even this needs a little guarding. For the tendency of the passions, unregulated by the Holy Spirit, is not exactly or necessarily toward sin itself—sin loved for its own sake, sin definitely grasped as disobedience to God—but toward self-gratification, altogether irrespective of the divine will and wholly regardless whether God be pleased or displeased. It is not a tendency which says deliberately, “Evil, be thou my good,” or which takes pains to discriminate against self-indulgence when that self-indulgence happens to coincide with what is right. A person may properly be said to be in a state of sin when he so habitually chooses to indulge his own appetites and passions, rather than to obey God,

that this evil habit may be considered the permanent attitude of his will. In the language of Scripture, "The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." They have deliberately adopted their depravity, freely making it their own, and so may have ascribed to them a settled state or condition of responsible badness, which is sin.

CHAPTER III.

Regeneration and Holiness.

THE coupling of these two words together, to be treated in close connection as though they were very much the same, will seem strange to some who have not carefully considered their signification. We have intentionally joined the terms, to indicate our deep sense of the need of a new departure in the use of the second one. As we view it, no one thing has done more to muddle Methodist theology in this matter than the turning aside of the word "holiness" from its true meaning. And until that meaning shall be restored it is idle to dream of anything like harmony and consistency.

As noted in the preliminary chapter, the universal custom has been, from the days of Wesley until now, to make "holiness," "perfection," and "entire sanctification" refer to precisely the same state of grace. Very many writers expressly say that they make no distinction between any of the multitude of terms currently used; and most other writers think

it needless to even mention that they entirely ignore definition, for their practice makes it at once sufficiently evident. The motives for this procedure it were, perhaps, not best to inquire into too closely; but the results are manifest and very mischievous.

One of the chief of them is that the Church in general is practically denied any share in this beautiful word and its many coordinate expressions, and that the texts of Scripture wherein these words occur are held to have no application to the mass of believers. What a state of things is here! The great majority of Christ's true Church, who have been genuinely born again and are happy in the love of God, are branded as unholy and are classified with sinners; for there are only two classes recognized in the word, the holy and the unholy, the righteous and the sinful, the children of God and the children of the devil. This word "holy" has been unlawfully appropriated and applied to a special class in the Church, when nothing can be plainer than that it belongs to the whole. Violent hands have been laid upon it, wrenching it from its time-honored connections and hallowed associations. Those who should have been its defenders have apparently slept at their posts, or have been so little aware of the importance of what was being done that

they failed to realize in season the seriousness of the movement. By sheer persistency of claim and clamor, without shadow of warrant or reason, the point has been carried, and the supineness of the people most concerned has yielded that which ought never to have been allowed.

It is time that those who love the truth and the Church should rise up with just indignation at this high-handed procedure, and should vehemently protest against its further continuance. It is not a matter of hair-splitting technicalities, of stickling for an unimportant term, of "making a man an offender for a word." It is something of fundamental significance, since it involves the essential elements of Christian character, calls unclean and impure those whom God hath cleansed and who are heirs of immortal life, and impliedly removes from them an obligation which it is the main business of every Gospel preacher to press continually upon their conscience—the obligation to live free from sin. That all the saved are sanctified and that there are no unholy children of God ought to be rung out so constantly from the pulpit and prayer meeting platform, and ought to be so prominently set forth in every publication touching upon this theme, that it would be impossible any longer

to confuse the minds of the people about it or impose upon them this perverted nomenclature. Silence in the matter has become complicity with a most alarming and dangerous tendency.

If it is asked, how we are so sure that the current custom is wrong, we reply by referring the doubter to the New Testament. As we understand it, people determine the correct meaning of a word by reference to the usage of the best writers. We know of no other way. What such authorities instinctively, deliberately, unanimously agree upon as the true significance of a term must of necessity stand. And, since Christian theology has its roots in the Christian Scripture, the usage of the New Testament writers must be the controlling element in fixing the significance of a word of that kind.

Consulting these sources, what do we find? That the principal Greek noun rendered "holiness" and "sanctification," together with its affiliated verb and adjective rendered to "sanctify" or "make holy" and "holy ones" or "saints," occurs some hundreds of times. And a careful scrutiny of these passages discloses in substance this: that they who are termed "brethren," or "believers," or "disciples," or "the Church of God," or "the elect," "the peo-

ple for God's own possession " and " partakers of the heavenly calling," are also freely called " holy," and " sanctified," and " saints," these latter words being put in habitual apposition with the former expressions, so as to leave no room for doubt as to the application. It does not seem worth while to take the space to make an exhaustive examination or give extensive quotations in support of this position, for anyone possessing a New Testament and a concordance, especially a Greek concordance, can speedily verify it ; nor will anyone, we are persuaded, have the hardihood to question it.

The introductions to Paul's epistles, for one thing, can be easily consulted by all ; and they tell a plain story. The first letter to the Corinthians, for example, is addressed " unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, even them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." The second letter is similarly addressed : " Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in the whole of Achaia." Other inscriptions are " To the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus ;" " To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi ;" " To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colossæ ;" " To all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints."

A passage of great significance in fixing the meaning is 1 Cor. vi, 11, where the apostle, writing to the Corinthian Church, says, "But ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God," making these three terms, as the connection shows, but different expressions or aspects of the work wrought upon them and for them when they passed out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God.

Another decisive passage is Eph. iv, 11-15, where the various Gospel agencies—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers—are said to be "for the perfecting of the saints [or holy ones], unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain . . . unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, . . . but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, which is the head, even Christ." "Saints," or holy ones, here, as in other places, means nothing else but the body of Christ, that is, the Church, whose members are to be perfected or built up in knowledge and faith by the earnest labor of those appointed over them, until they shall have passed out of the children's class into the full maturity of growth.

It hardly seems needful to multiply special examples. The usage is practically uniform. "Holiness" is constantly linked with such terms as "godliness" and "righteousness," and is used interchangeably with them. (See Luke i, 75; Eph. iv, 24; 2 Peter iii, 11.) It is put in opposition to "uncleanness," as is seen in the well-known and conclusive passage, 1 Thess. iv, 3-7: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles which know not God. . . . For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification." It is something which all believers, "sons and daughters of the Most High," are understood to possess, and which they must set themselves to perfect, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. vii, 1), and to be established in, "to the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness" (1 Thess. iii, 13).

From all this it appears certain that if we base our use of the word upon the Scripture, as we are in honor bound to do, we have no right to permit its exclusive employment for indicating an advanced stage of Christian experience unto which only a very small part of

God's children attain. To do so would be to make hundreds of passages of Scripture meaningless and throw all interpretation of the word into confusion. Every principle of honesty and right reason demands that we employ the word in our current theological discussion in such a way as to promote, instead of preventing, the correct understanding of Holy Scripture. Hence, we are shut up to such a meaning of the term as will not exclude any portion of the Christian life or of those who are members of God's family, washed in the blood of the Lamb and entitled to the inheritance of the saved. The Bible position unquestionably is that all who are justified are also sanctified, or made holy, clean, and pure.

The chief offenders in this matter of monopolizing a Scripture word to which they have no such exclusive right are in the habit of admitting, with quite an air of magnanimity, when pressed about their practice, that at regeneration holiness begins, and that all who are born again are initially or partially holy. But this will not suffice. It does not fully meet the case and is not an adequate expression of the fact. It is a part of the truth, but not the whole truth, and cannot be permitted to pass muster as though it were a satisfactory statement. Taken in connection with the fact

that they reserve the application of the word "holy" in an unqualified sense to themselves, that is, to those who have passed a second degree of grace, it conveys a false impression. It is as much as to say that others have but a touch of holiness, not enough to justify any claim to the title as properly descriptive of their state; they are still, in by far the larger part, unholy or sinful and, hence, to be ranged in that class.

This must be emphatically repudiated. They are something more than partly holy, with an implication that it is a small part. It might about as well be said that they are partly born. If they are truly born of God, which is the supposition, for we are referring to none others, they are predominantly and distinctively holy and, hence, have full title to this descriptive appellation. Just as when life begins a person is alive or living, so when holiness begins a person is holy. There may be many degrees of life or vitality; but there is, strictly speaking, no halfway condition, where a person is neither dead nor alive. So, while there are many degrees of holiness, there is no midway state between holiness and sinfulness. This is not saying that if a man is holy at all he is perfectly holy or as holy as he can be; but it is saying that if he is holy he is holy,

and nothing short of it. Holiness has dominion in and over all such as are regenerate. Jesus reigns in their spirit and body. They are delivered from the rule of sin and death and Satan, under which they have groaned so long. They may be but babes in Christ and, hence in some degree carnal; but they are, for all that, in the main spiritual and saintly and sanctified, that is, set apart for the service of God. This element is the controlling one, is thoroughly in the ascendant, and has every right to give its name to the condition reached.

What, then, is holiness? It is quite time for a definition. We would frame it thus: holiness is that condition of human nature wherein the love of God rules. Of course this brief statement might be indefinitely expanded, and many other things might be included. Many other things will of necessity follow, and so are fairly implied. If the love of God rules, the will of God, so far as known, will certainly be done; and every effort will be made to know it, as well as to do it. The inner will govern the outer; conduct will conform to character. They who love God will not knowingly or willfully, with intention or deliberation, violate his law or transgress his commandments.

There can, of course, be but one kind of

holiness; just as there is but one kind of sinfulness. The two terms stand over against each other in absolute opposition. Sinfulness is a state of departure from the will of God; holiness is a state of conformity to that will. Holiness is wholeness or health; sinfulness is disease, a moral malady, resulting, if continued, in death. In sinfulness self is the center of interest, the ultimate end of activity, and the object of supreme love; in holiness, God.

Methodist writers quite generally, beginning with John Wesley himself, have assented to this position. Its importance is sufficient to justify a few quotations. Wesley affirmed it repeatedly. Perhaps the most significant passage is in his sermon "On Patience" (*Sermons*, vol. ii, pp. 221, 222), where he says, "Many persons . . . have not spoken warily upon this head, not according to the oracles of God. They have spoken of the work of sanctification, taking the word in its full sense, as if it were quite of another kind, as if it differed entirely from that which is wrought in justification. But this is a great and dangerous mistake, and has a natural tendency to make us undervalue that glorious work of God which was wrought in us when we were justified. . . . There is, in that hour, a general change from inward sinfulness

to inward holiness. The love of the creature is changed to the love of the Creator, the love of the world into the love of God. Earthly desires . . . are, in that instant, changed, by the mighty power of God, into heavenly desires. . . . It [entire sanctification] does not imply any new kind of holiness; let no man imagine thus. . . . Love is the sum of Christian sanctification; it is the one kind of holiness, which is found only in various degrees, in the believers, who are distinguished by St. John into 'little children, young men, and fathers.' . . . In the same proportion as he [the babe in Christ] grows in faith he grows in holiness, he increases in love, lowliness, meekness, in every part of the image of God."

Of modern authors who say the same thing, many might be mentioned. It is sufficient, perhaps, to specify a few. Dr. A. Lowrey (*Possibilities of Grace*, p 204) says, "The work of entire holiness, then, is subsequent to initial holiness and essentially the same in quality, but widely different in measure and completeness." So Bishop Foster, in his *Christian Purity* (pp. 181, 182): "It has been the universal teaching of the Church that regeneration is a degree of holiness; that entire sanctification is complete holiness has been as universally the creed of the Church. They

are, then, the same in kind. . . . They are evidently different in degree."

All this seems clear; and we would naturally expect from such a position that perfection in degree would be the only thing that could legitimately be claimed, as distinguishing entire from initial or partial sanctification. But, when they arrive at that point, to our amazement these same writers turn about and say something quite otherwise. For example, Bishop Foster, on page 76 of *Christian Purity*, describing entire holiness, says: "We believe it to include, in the second place, . . . the spiritual graces, as love, meekness, humility, and such like, in perfection—perfection, not of measure, but of kind. . . . We do mean that these graces exist, in the entirely sanctified soul, without alloy, without mixture, in simplicity." This would go to show that the difference was one, not merely of quantity, but of quality. The Rev. Dr. L. R. Dunn also says, in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* for October, 1867, speaking of the wholly sanctified, "These graces of the Spirit are not perfect in degree, but only in their nature or character." But, since they were, by general admission, perfect in their nature or character or kind before, even when first implanted, and are not perfect at any subsequent time in any

other sense, the inquirer after truth does not feel that he has made much headway in getting at an adequate explanation of the difference. So far as we can see, the theory most generally accepted furnishes no adequate explanation of this puzzle. Our own explanation will appear more fully in a subsequent chapter.

It is also important to notice, in this connection, that there is but one kind of love with which a discussion like this concerns itself. That is, putting aside earthly loves, such as love between the sexes, love between relations, and such like, which do not come under treatment in theology, and confining our thought to the heavenly or divine love, we find it to be always of the same quality. The quantity of it no doubt greatly varies. The rule of love may be more or less emphatic, comprehensive, pervasive. Inferior elements may still have some footing in the soul, so that the total outcome may be more or less mixed and marred; but the divine love, which is the leading, controlling element, is not in itself subject to deterioration or adulteration. God, as it were, takes a portion of himself and infuses it into our being, thereby making us, as Peter says, "partakers of the divine nature." And this nature is always love, for "God is love;" it is always the same, pure, and per-

fect. Hence, divine love and perfect love are but different expressions for the same thing; and to ask a person if he possesses perfect love is to ask him if he possesses divine love.

That this is not the meaning commonly put upon the term "perfect love" in Methodist circles we are well aware. But we hold, nevertheless, that it is the proper meaning; and we appeal, as before, in confirmation of our use of the term, to the Holy Scriptures. There is but one book in the Bible where the phrase "perfect love," or its equivalent, is used—the first Epistle of John; and we see not how any candid person can critically examine the three passages in this epistle where the phrase occurs without being convinced that John used it in the sense we have indicated. The first place is in the fourth and fifth verses of the second chapter: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him: but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected." The apostle here, as in other places, makes it very clear that to know God and to keep his word or commandments are the same thing. And in this position he does but follow his Master, who declared (John xiv, 21), "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth

me." To know and love God, then, or, in other words, to be his child, is to keep his word; and whosoever keeps his word, John says, has perfect love, which is precisely the same as to say that every child of God, in having God's love, has perfect love.

The other passages, which are in the fourth chapter, are of precisely similar import. In the twelfth verse we read, "If we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us." So a second synonym for perfect love, or test of its possession, is loving one another. And certainly all Christians, all who love God, do this; for Jesus says (John xiii, 35), "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." And John himself, in the twentieth verse of this very fourth chapter, declares, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen." No demonstration, then, could be stronger, that all who have any of God's love have perfect love.

The seventeenth and eighteenth verses, the remaining passage of the three which must settle the significance of this term, speak to the same purport. They read thus: "Herein is love made perfect with us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; be-

cause as he is, even so are we in this world. There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love." Here "love" and "perfect love" are distinctly used as exact synonyms in parallel clauses, which must be decisive. Furthermore, the test of having divine love or perfect love is declared to be freedom from fear of punishment, such fear as would prevent boldness in the day of judgment. It ought not to require many words to show that every genuine child of God has precisely this fearlessness and is not in dread of torment, like a guilty sinner. No, indeed. Knowing his sins forgiven through the blood of the Lamb and having Jesus for his advocate with the Father, he is confident and joyful in view of death and all beyond. John Wesley well wrote:

Bold shall I stand in thy great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully absolved through these I am,
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

And Charles Wesley, describing the joys of the young convert whose chains have just fallen off, similarly sings:

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, with all in him, is mine.
Alive in him, my living Head,
And clothed with righteousness divine,

Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ, my own.

It is, then, entirely plain that in John's estimation all who are born again into the kingdom of God are born into God's perfect love and have his pure love perfected, or effected and accomplished, in them. And we are greatly at a loss to comprehend how so totally different an understanding of the word has become so widely prevalent. It seems to us to furnish a strong illustration of how little careful and really independent thought has been given to this theme, in spite of the multitudes of volumes that have been written upon it. And it especially shows that the whole terminology of the doctrine needs a thorough overhauling.

Now that we have shown that there is but one kind of holiness, which is love, and but one kind of love, which is perfect, it will be readily perceived why we put holiness and regeneration in such close juxtaposition. Regeneration must be defined as that radical change in human nature, wrought by the Holy Spirit, whereby the divine love is imparted and made, to a greater or less degree, predominant. In other words, regeneration is a process; holiness, the resulting state. Regeneration may be described as a partial

restoration of that original balance or harmony of the powers which was disturbed at the fall, a partial reproduction of the divine image, the initiation of that process which will be completed when the full restoration and reproduction shall be accomplished ; as is indicated in Col. iii, 10: " And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him." The same thought is found in 2 Cor. iii, 18, and iv, 16, where the thought is brought out that, while we are looking at the things which are not seen, beholding as in a mirror the "glory of the Lord," our light afflictions are working for us an exceeding weight of glory, and we are being changed or transformed into the image of the Lord, from glory to glory ; yea, day by day our inward man is being renewed.

Regeneration, then, is that change which God effects in us when we repent of our sins and by faith take Christ to be our personal Saviour. He accepts the offering of ourselves that we sincerely make, and qualifies us for his service by giving us, as we say, a new heart, that is, by such an impartation of his love, revealed to us in Jesus, that the old love of sin is largely taken away and the new love for righteousness more or less completely takes its

place. In this way our spiritual part is strengthened, our animal part is weakened, to a greater or less degree, according to circumstances, but in all cases, to such a degree that the Spirit now predominates and holds the animal in subjection, so that sin no longer has dominion over us, no longer reigns in our mortal body, that we should obey the lusts thereof; but we are made free from the rule of sin, becoming "servants of righteousness," "servants to God," as Paul so well explains in the sixth chapter of Romans saying, "Our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin." In other words, the trend of our life is radically changed. It is switched over to another track and put on the up grade instead of the down grade. The movement is reversed. The controlling influence is now heavenly, instead of earthly; the preponderant tendencies are toward God.

The qualifying words "more or less completely," which we have felt obliged to insert in the description of the change wrought at the new birth, are imperatively called for by the manifest fact that very great differences are constantly seen in the amount of change wrought at conversion. All have noticed that

in some cases a very much greater transformation is wrought than in others, very much less of self lingers, very much more of Christ is taken on. How is this, and why? Why is not the same work wrought in every case, since it is the same divine agent who operates; and why is not an absolutely complete work wrought in the soul of the penitent sinner, all of self being driven out and the perfect image of Christ formed within? It certainly would be if God could fully have his way and if he were the single agent concerned. But he is not. His method of salvation for men, since they are responsible beings, endowed with freedom of will and put in charge of their own destiny, requires in all its parts the cooperation of two factors, the divine and the human. Hence, in order that there should be a perfect work it is not enough that the divine factor be perfect. God is limited and restricted by the imperfect capacities and powers of the human factor with whom, as well as upon whom, he operates. God is not able to do what he would like for man, because of the latter's weakness and disability.

This disability greatly varies in different individuals; and from this fact arises the great variety of results obtained at conversion—the different stages of moral and spiritual advance-

ment, or moral purity, reached at that point. Some are more greatly changed than others and are more thoroughly purified; not, of course, because they have a more powerful Saviour, but because they prove more responsive to his power and are more successful in adjusting themselves to the conditions of his grace. Some, far more clearly and fully than others, apprehend the love of God; and the effect thus produced, by the revelation of God's Son in them, is just in proportion to the clearness and fullness with which they apprehend that revelation or take in and lay hold of that wonderful, wonderful love. If the sinner's powers were such that he could perfectly apprehend the love of God, even as Christ, of course, apprehended it, then he would become a little Christ, that is, a perfect representative of Christ, at once. The celestial influences would so continuously and mightily flood his entire being that he would have no more trouble with sin and self; the old derangement and disorder, introduced into human nature when Adam departed from God, would be at an end; the perfect balance of powers, lost at the fall, would be restored; and heavenly harmony would perpetually reign.

But the sinner cannot do this. He has no such power, no power sufficient for anything

like a perfect apprehension of what the Father longs to bestow. So God has to content himself with bestowing simply what the sinner is able to receive. It may be little, it may be much; in no case is it all. The penitent soul means well and does well—does as well as it can, as well as it knows how. Otherwise, it would not be accepted. But because of its necessarily imperfect enlightenment and empowerment its consecration and faith are but imperfect and partial. Hence, the work which God does for it at that time is, of necessity, correspondingly partial.

The fact is, we are so made that God is obliged to proceed in this gradual way with us, leading us along, step by step, as we are able to bear it and to give the intelligent cooperation of our own will to the work of grace. Where a person, through exceptional advantages of one kind or another, is fitted to receive powerful enlightenment by the divine Spirit, and that enlightenment, being given, is followed by correspondingly thorough consecration, faith easily grasps large things, and a greater work is done than where these conditions are not met. But in no case is an absolutely complete work done, for the simple reason that in no case is it possible that there should be an absolutely complete enlighten-

ment, together with an absolutely complete apprehension of the divine love.

It is evident, then, that the holiness into which regeneration introduces us is a matter of many degrees. And the word should always be used with this thought in view; not as though it stood for some one exact condition, with clearly marked bounds, but as covering a very large extent of territory, nothing less, indeed, than the entire Christian life from beginning to end.

We hesitate, however, to speak of regeneration as having degrees. It is true that the word has been taken by a few as embracing all that we mean by holiness, not only the impartation of spiritual life and divine love, but the complete development of it until the moral image of God, lost at the fall, is perfectly recovered. But we fail to see that anything is gained by this attempt to broaden the word. It seems to us that only confusion could result. It would be in the teeth of what is practically the uniform usage of Scripture; and this of itself is a fatal objection. The biblical writers speak of it as something that has occurred in the experience of believers, at a definite point in the past when they believed, not as something which is still going on. John, speaking of "them that believe on his name," who have

become "children of God," says (i, 13) that they "were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." So Paul, in Eph. ii, 1: "You did he quicken, when ye were dead." He also calls the change a "new creation." The very figure of the new birth, which underlies the word, shuts us up to the initiation of life, and becomes distorted and grotesque if it be too much expanded. Let us keep, therefore, to the generally received and everywhere understood meaning of the word "regeneration" as the mysterious initial process whereby we pass from spiritual death to spiritual life, resulting in a state of holiness or divine love, which may be stronger or weaker, fuller or feebler, according to circumstances.

Sanctification, as being one of the principal terms employed, needs a little attention. It is somewhat ambiguous in that it has both an active and a passive meaning; it signifies, both the act of making holy, and the state of being made holy or the result of the action. The latter is, we believe, the exclusive meaning of the word in the New Testament, and is decidedly the correct translation of *ἁγιασμός*, a verbal noun from *ἁγιάζω*, to *sanctify*, denoting the effect of the action of the verb. In King James's version it is translated five times by

“sanctification,” and five times by “holiness.” The Revised Version has, in the interest of uniformity, very properly changed these latter five to make them agree with the others. In this passive meaning it expresses very nearly the same thing as “holiness,” which denotes the state of being holy; but the latter lacks something of the flavor which the former has by reason of its direct derivation from an active verb. There is carried over into it a tone, so to speak, which the nicely trained ear will readily recognize. One could hardly say, for example, of angels or of God, that they possessed sanctification, because in their case the sanctifying or purifying process is not to be thought of. We would speak of their holiness, using thus the abstract, instead of the verbal, noun. But we can speak of men as being in a state of sanctification, because they have reached their condition by the purifying process. The New Testament revisers have heeded this distinction, translating the two Greek abstracts, *ἁγιωσύνη* and *ἁγιότης*, by “holiness,” but the two Greek verbal nouns, *ἁγιασμός* and *ἁγνισμός*, by “sanctification” and “purification” respectively.

Practically, however, in all ordinary speech, “sanctification,” in its passive meaning, is taken as the exact equivalent of “holiness.” In

its active meaning, it comes very close to "regeneration," in that both signify *to make holy* or *produce the state wherein the love of God rules*. Every person that is regenerated is also sanctified by the same act. Just as that which is born of the flesh is flesh, so that which is born of the Holy Spirit is a holy spirit, is possessed of a holy nature, is made holy or brought into a state of holiness. But, while every regeneration is a sanctification, all sanctifications are not regenerations. A man is born again only once; he is sanctified or purified a great many times, just as many as may be needful for the completion of the work which, as we have already seen, is never completed at the beginning, because of the weakness of the human factor. Regeneration is not repeated. Sanctification is repeated again and again, each succeeding time bringing us into closer likeness to Christ and giving us a larger measure of the divine image. Regeneration is a finished work; sanctification is a progressive one.

— Another term, very closely connected with those which in this chapter we are trying to make plain, is "cleansing." This, of course, is purely figurative; and we are disposed to think that the failure to recognize this fact and to discriminate between the figure and the

thing really signified has done about as much to mix up people's ideas on this subject as any one thing that can be mentioned. To be washed in blood, and thereby cleansed from sin, is preeminently a Jewish form of expression, drawn from the bloody sacrifices which, through the preparatory ages, pointed forward to the Lamb to be slain on Calvary as a propitiation for the sins of the world. Nothing could be more natural or appropriate than for the disciples of Jesus, who were brought up as Jews and steeped in all these associations, having trod the reeking temple courts and thus participated in the paschal ceremonies, to employ the figure of blood cleansing to signify the change wrought by the Holy Spirit when, through faith in the saving efficacy of Christ's death, sinners were freed from sin and made holy. But any figure too persistently and exclusively used, under such circumstances that its origination is wholly lost sight of, is pretty sure to make mischief and lead to misconception. That has emphatically been the fate of this. The indiscriminating common mind, hearing through hymns and prayer meeting testimonies a ceaseless round of declaration that we have been cleansed with blood, has come to think, if not, indeed, of a strictly literal application of the life fluid of the Saviour, at

least of a process whereby something is taken away from the soul.

A similar wrong turn has been given to the ideas of a great many by a misapprehension of another figure, found in Heb. xii, 15, 16, where mention is made of a "root of bitterness." Taken wholly out of its connection and used as a detached expression, it has been made to bear a meaning entirely foreign to that manifestly intended by its author and fraught with no little harm. The idea of the apostle is readily manifest when the two verses are read together, especially if taken with Dean Alford's rendering and punctuation, which bring out the sense more clearly, and are closer to the original. He gives it thus: "Looking diligently lest any man falling short of the grace of God—lest any root of bitterness springing up—trouble you, and thereby the greater number be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one meal sold his own birthright." The root of bitterness here spoken of is unquestionably a person. We know of no commentator who holds otherwise; and we see not how any ordinary reader, if he have intelligence enough to comprehend the simple rule, that the context must decide the sense in which an author uses a word, can come to any other conclusion.

What makes the matter doubly sure is the fact that the phrase is probably taken from, or suggested by, the passage in Deut. xxix, 18, 20, which reads as follows: "Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go to serve the gods of those nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; . . . the Lord will not pardon him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man." The exhortation in Hebrews to separate from the congregation any troubler or disturber of the peace, any man who fails, through slothfulness, of running and who lags behind, lest others might be contaminated by his evil example, is in no way calculated to suggest or support the thought, that the heart of the child of God who has not received the "second blessing" is full of roots of bitterness which must be eradicated, his conversion having only broken off the tops.

Both the cleansing and the eradicating figures, if much employed, are almost sure to put the person on the wrong track, and lead him to unwarrantable conclusions. When he begins to talk about something being taken away from the human heart, as by rubbing or dig-

ging, he is pretty sure to be thinking of depravity as though it were something brought into or added to man's nature, some foreign substance infused into his being, which divine grace can instantaneously remove. This is quite wrong. At the fall of Adam no additional powers, faculties, appetites, passions, or propensities were given him, and none of the constituents of his being before possessed were taken away. There was a disarrangement, that is all—a change in the relative order of strength, a disturbance of the equilibrium, a different combination of the same things.

Hence, for us to become restored to our pristine condition and walk once more in the full image of God no addition or subtraction, strictly speaking, is required, only a restoration of harmony. And this harmony will come, as we have already explained, just in the degree that the spiritual part regains its lost ascendancy over the animal. The ease and completeness of the subjugation of the latter to the former marks the degree of our moral purity or deliverance from depravity; in other words, the degree of our restoration to that perfect normal relation of things possessed by man before the fall, when there had been no derangement.

The destruction, either partial or total, of depravity does not imply the destruction of any of the powers or susceptibilities of the soul. The unreasoning impulses, instincts, and passions of human nature are in no case to be uprooted or destroyed, but to be restrained, regulated, and properly disciplined. They existed in man's state of innocency. Their existence, therefore, now cannot be regarded as sinful; but they become sinful when, and only when, unduly excited or improperly indulged. The power of resentment, for example, is a component part of the mind; but it is to be reduced to its proper proportions and made to act in subordination to the judgment and to obey the smallest monitions of the conscience. So the appetite for food is to be indulged only for the glory of God and according to the dictates of duty. And the same may be said of all the desires and affections. They all have their place and use; not one could be spared; if a single one were to be removed it would leave us less than man—maimed, crippled, and unfitted to do a full man's work.

So long as these things are firmly ruled, held down, and kept in their proper relations they are innocent and pure. It is only when they break out of bounds that they become

tendencies to evil and incitements to sin. Nor can there ever come a time, in this world, at least, when they will not be liable to break out, when they will not need to be kept under by watchfulness and prayer. If we were as pure as Adam we should certainly fall, as did he, unless we stood guard with a great deal more diligence than he manifested; for our surroundings would be less favorable.

From all this it will be seen that the figure of a rebel accords far more nearly with the facts of the case than the figure of a root. Certain things must remain within us, integral parts of our human nature, which contain in their purest condition an inevitable tendency to pass beyond due limits and so to bring us into sin. There will always remain, no matter what height of grace we may reach, the need for firmly repressing these tendencies. They cannot be extirpated; they can and must be kept in their proper places and maintained in rightful action by vigilant control. This is not saying but that every evil tendency may be destroyed; for these natural tendencies, which lead to evil unless looked after, are not evil in themselves, but in every way good, being an essential part of the nature with which God has endowed us, with which he endowed humanity at the beginning. They

are not, strictly speaking, tendencies to evil, but only tendencies to gratification, irrespective of the moral quality of the action to which they urge. Hunger, for instance, is a blind instinct and craves gratification, without the slightest reference to whether it can be gratified innocently or not ; that is for the judgment to decide in each particular case. Hunger simply urges to action as a blind impulsive force ; and this action must be refused by the will except at those times when it is perceived to be right. But the urging will be felt, whether it should be yielded to or not, and, hence, often calls, and will call to the end, for resistance.

Instead of cleansing, then, we would suggest that "empowering" is a much better term to use, and one less liable to mislead, for the effect of God's incoming to the heart of man. We are convinced that this entirely satisfies the requirements of the Scripture passages where the former word appears, and simply puts in more modern and intelligible guise the thought of the inspired writer. It meets the needs, as we understand it, of the famous passage in the first chapter of 1 John, where so many have mistakenly found reference to the "second blessing" that should entirely deliver from depravity. We fail to see that

John had anything of this sort in mind. As in the texts of the same writer, above examined, concerning perfect love, so here, we think he was simply referring to the privileges and possessions of all Christians or genuine believers, without distinction. What does he say? Merely this, that "if we confess our sins" and "walk in the light," that is, if we do God's will, as far as it is revealed to us, and keep whatsoever commandments come within our knowledge and power, turning away from sin to the Saviour, as all true disciples do, then God, on his part, will be faithful to his plighted word, will be just in recognizing the atonement that has made satisfaction for sin, and will not fail to "forgive us our sins;" we shall have "fellowship one with another," loving the other members of the one blessed family; "and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." The significance of this last must be that, just as to the Jew sprinkled blood cleansed, that is, brought into harmony with God, so the blood of Jesus, that is, the manifestation of the love of Jesus in his death for us on the cross, does this for us, empowers us against temptation, and enables us to keep from all sin.

We have this power continually from the moment we confess our sins and enter the

kingdom of light. It is not something finished in the past and left behind ; but a perpetual, present, "cleanseth," empowereth now. It is not something that applies to the perfection of God's children, but to all who walk in the light and love each other, as his true children, according to John, invariably do. For if "we walk in the darkness" or fail to love one another, and yet say we know God and "have fellowship with him," "we lie, and do not the truth." The cleansing from all sin, then, is being delivered from its guilt and power and practice, so that no blameworthiness remains and we are free from all condemnation and admitted into the liberty and purity of the sons and daughters of the Most High. This empowering is manifestly a matter of more or less, as already explained. According to the fullness of the power will be the degree of sanctification. And this blamelessness, it cannot be too much emphasized, is the distinguishing characteristic of all loyal lovers of the Lord.

This latter point deserves attention, because it has come to be too much the custom of writers committed to what we deem a wrong view of holiness to assume, if not assert, that a blameless life is the exclusive possession of those who have passed on beyond what they

often term "mere justification." This position is the more remarkable, in that the very word "justification" should be of itself a corrective of the error. He who is justified is certainly not condemned; and he who is in a state of justification, that is, who steadily and permanently maintains the same attitude toward God that was his when his sins were forgiven, cannot be in a state of condemnation, or, in other words, must be in a state of blamelessness or guiltlessness. It is true that he cannot be in a state of complete acceptance with God, entirely without blame at his hands, unless he is constantly pressing on to know more of God, to conform more closely to his will, to walk in the light and live up to the light which has been given him. But this is included in thorough loyalty and taken for granted as one of the marks of the true Christian. Ability to do this, to maintain his justification undiminished, is given him when he becomes a child of God.

This is the empowering referred to above, which is one of the inseparable accompaniments of the forgiveness of sin, and is, in fact, sanctification—the birthright of all God's children. And this, it should be observed, is the only normal Christian life according to the New Testament standard. Nothing short of this is

regarded as genuine. Nothing less than this is recognized as worthy of the name. This is what Christians are expected to be, considered to be, and are, so far as they conform to the meaning of the word. This is their prescribed character, more or less fully realized. Definite and uniform victory over evil is the regular type of religion which the Scripture writers have continually in their mind. Anything different from this is decidedly abnormal. Though it is provided that "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," yet it is regarded as a sort of backsliding, a degeneration, a going over temporarily in some measure to the territory of the adversary. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." "He that doeth sin is of the devil." It must, at least, be admitted by all that they who have not retained their full justification, even if they cannot be set down in the class that we usually call backsliders, have, without question, retrograded relatively to their light, and do not stand in quite the same attitude with relation to God that they did in the moment when he pardoned their sins. For then nothing whatever, so far as their light disclosed it, was kept back. The unvarying condition of admittance into the kingdom is unreserved submission. No

one can become a babe in Christ without giving himself to God as best he knows how, without making a consecration that is complete up to his knowledge. If anything is willfully retained the witness of approval will be withheld.

Such is the high level on which the Christian life starts out. God means that it should stay on that level and makes provision accordingly. But somehow, as men enter practical life and encounter the fierce temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, they almost always, sooner or later, drop down below that level. They do not remain consecrated up to their light! The light is continually increasing. New revelations are made to them day by day. Experience teaches, observation teaches, the Bible teaches, the pulpit teaches, the prayer meeting teaches, affliction teaches. They are coming to know more and more all the while as to the requirements of God's law and the inclusions of God's service. But while their knowledge thus grows it comes to pass that their practice does not keep pace with it. Their life has fallen below their light.

No one can question, we think, but that this is the condition of the great mass of church members, yes, of the large majority, even of those who are not members of the visible Church only, but of the invisible, entitled to

be counted in with the children of God, not having yet forfeited by absolute apostasy their gift of adoption. They are not as loyal to God as they ought to be or as they once were. They give evidence to the contrary. They accuse themselves. They freely confess their delinquencies. What they ought to do is at once to bring their consecration up to date. There was no need of their letting it get behind. They must now take a new start, and inaugurate a different order of things. They have been letting themselves drift. Now they must seize the helm with vigor and put the vessel on her true course. They have let themselves get becalmed in the shallows. They are perilously near the mud banks and rocks of ruin. Their only safety is to call all hands to duty, square away the yards, spread every inch of canvas, and make for deep water. Then they will emerge into the regular, normal Christian life, where having believed, they enter into rest; having surrendered to God so far as they know, other things to surrender will be revealed to them as fast as they are fitted to take advantage of the disclosure; and these being, in turn, surrendered, they will go steadily, grandly on all the time. And so the attitude of conversion is perpetuated right along through the whole life.

✓ If the definitions and distinctions which we have sought to establish in this chapter hold good, as we believe they must and will, if all the saved are sanctified, and all who are born of the Holy Spirit are holy, sinners alone being unholy, and if all who are justified are purified or empowered against sin, then it will require no argument to show the glaring impropriety, to use no harsher term, of which those are guilty who have sequestered this beautiful Scripture word "holiness" and striven to make it the exclusive property of a small, and not always lovely, class. The appointing of a special "holiness" meeting casts a slur upon the regular meetings of the church, as if they, forsooth, were for the promotion of unholiness, or, at least, of something quite different from the advancement of believers in the love of God. We hear, also, frequent mention of "holiness" papers and "holiness" ministers and "holiness" leagues. We claim that the Church itself, unless it have become essentially apostate and hopelessly corrupt (as the Methodist Episcopal Church certainly has not, although the "holiness" writers do their best to make it appear so), is always and everywhere a holiness league; that all Christian meetings and ministers and literature are for the promotion of true Scripture holiness. Holiness is not

a special department of church work, like temperance or education. It is so fundamental, so interwoven with the very fiber of our religion, that it can never be separated for a moment from it. Take this away, and nothing of any importance is left. The world, the flesh, and the devil promote unholiness, or sin. God and his people, without exception, stand always and everywhere for holiness, which is righteousness and the rule of love divine. The place to which the holy are bound is heaven; the unholy will be cast into hell.

One of the chief perennial perplexities with which, ever and anon, they wrestle who, by their theory and terminology, shut nearly all the children of God out from holiness, is what to say to the very natural charge that they also and consequently shut out all but a very few from heaven; for without holiness "no man shall see the Lord." They are driven generally to the most desperate expedients to escape this grave difficulty; for not many are brazen-faced enough to declare, in so many words, that only those of their own special set and shibboleth, out of all the millions of God's professed followers, are likely to see the inside of the pearly gates. Bishop Jesse T. Peck takes the bull by the horns in a very emphatic manner, and boldly asserts (*Central Idea of Chris-*

tianity, p. 59) his firm belief that no truly converted man can die while possessed of any remaining depravity. As he says, he answers the question, What is the fate of the truly converted man who dies before he is entirely sanctified? "by destroying it." But this kind of bald assumption is precisely of a piece with the kindred and equally baseless assumption of the Calvinist, that no truly converted person can possibly fall away and be lost. Both declarations fly straight in the face of such a multitude of clearly ascertained facts, that they are entirely rejected by all those who are not committed to the theories which they are obliged so to bolster up. It is scarcely worth while to attempt thus to be wise above what is written or clearly revealed.

It seems plain that all God's children, all who, having been once taken into his family, do not forfeit that birthright by apostasy, will be admitted freely to his home of bliss on high, and that the sanctification, or holiness, needful as a passport there is the holiness which all who are born of the Holy Spirit necessarily receive. It seems evident that good people, true believers, die in all stages of maturity and go thus, for all we know, to paradise. It seems also plain that deliverance from the earthly body gives to the most mature, as well as the

least mature, an additional qualification for paradise; while the being clothed upon with the heavenly body gives also an additional qualification for the heavenly place.

What more do we know? Is it not best to leave it here and cease vain speculations and rash assertions, which only serve to confuse and depress? Are we not fully warranted in assuring the weakest believer, who comes to the close of his sadly imperfect life conscious, perhaps, that not a single day has been really immaculate, that if he has a humble, genuine, loving trust in Jesus, the merciful Saviour, in spite of all his faults and sins, will present even his worthless name before the Father's face and in the New Jerusalem assign his soul a place?

CHAPTER IV.

Perfection.

IT may well be doubted if any question has given more trouble to Methodist theologians or awakened more diverse responses than this—precisely what Christian perfection is. They have answered it in a great variety of ways.

John Wesley, in his *Plain Account* (pp. 61, 62, 167), says: "Christian perfection is that love of God and our neighbor which implies deliverance from all sin;" "the loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength;" "it is 'perfect love.' This is the essence of it. Its properties or inseparable fruits are rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks." In Sermon XL he says: "Christian perfection . . . is only another term for holiness. They are two names for the same thing. Thus, every one that is holy is, in the Scripture sense, perfect. . . . A Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin. This is the glorious privilege of every Christian; yea, though he be but a babe in Christ. But it is only of those who are strong in the

Lord 'and have overcome the wicked one,' or rather of those who 'have known him that is from the beginning,' that it can be affirmed they are in such a sense perfect, as, secondly, to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers." In one of his letters (ccxxxix), dated 1770, he writes: "I am in doubt whether there be any soul clothed with flesh and blood which enjoys every right temper. . . . Some wrong temper, at least, in a small degree, almost necessarily follows from wrong judgment." In Sermon LXXXI, "On Perfection," published in 1785, he says: "This salvation from sin, from all sin, is another description of perfection. . . . It [a wrong judgment] will perfectly well consist with salvation from sin, according to that definition of sin which I apprehend to be the scriptural definition of it—a voluntary transgression of a known law." In Sermon LXXXVIII, "On Patience," published in 1784, he says: "The apostle seems to mean by this expression, τέλειοι [*perfect*], ye shall be wholly delivered from every evil work, from every evil word, from every sinful thought, yea, from every evil desire, passion, temper, from all inbred corruption, from all remains of the carnal mind." In a letter to "a pious and sensible woman," in 1769, he writes (*Journal*, vol. ii, p. 309): "By Christian perfection I mean . . .

having all the mind that was in Christ, . . . walking uniformly as Christ walked." In a letter (cccli) to another person, in 1762, he writes: "I know no persons living who are so deeply conscious of their needing Christ, both as prophet, priest, and king, as those who believe themselves, and whom I believe, to be cleansed from all sin; I mean from all pride, anger, evil desire, idolatry, and unbelief. These very persons feel more than ever their own ignorance, littleness of grace, coming short of the full mind that was in Christ, and walking less accurately than they might have done after their divine pattern." In a letter to Joseph Benson, in 1770, he calls sanctification "a recovery of the whole image of God." Also in his works, vol. v, p. 35, he speaks of it as "a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity, a recovery of the divine nature." In his sermon (LXVII) on "The End of Christ's Coming," he says: "Here, then, we see, in the clearest, strongest light, what is real religion: a restoration of man, by him that bruises the serpent's head, to all that the old serpent deprived him of; a restoration, not only to the favor, but likewise to the image of God, implying, not barely deliverance from sin, but the being filled with the fullness of God. . . . Nothing short of this is Christian religion."

To another correspondent (Mrs. Maitland) he writes : “ ‘ But is there no sin in those who are perfect in love ? ’ I believe not.” To his brother Charles he writes (Jackson’s *Life of Charles Wesley*, vol. ii, p. 209) : “ I do not contend for the term ‘ sinless,’ though I do not object against it,” as, of course, he could not, since freedom from all sin is the same as sinlessness, and the whole significance of it turns on what is meant by sin.

John Fletcher, in his *Last Check to Antinomianism*, gives the name “ perfection ” to “ the maturity of grace peculiar to established believers under their respective dispensations.” “ By ‘ Christian perfection,’ ” he continues, “ we mean nothing but the cluster and maturity of the graces which compose the Christian character in the Church militant.” “ We frequently use, as St. John, the phrase ‘ perfect love ’ instead of the word ‘ perfection ; ’ understanding by it the pure love of God, shed abroad in the heart of established believers by the Holy Ghost.” “ As we shall be judged by this ‘ law of liberty,’ we maintain not only that it may, but also that it must, be kept.” “ So long as they [established believers] fulfill ‘ the law of liberty ’ by pure love they do not sin according to the Gospel ; because, evangelically speaking, ‘ sin is the transgression,’ and ‘ love

is the fulfilling,' of that law. . . . Of consequence, an evangelically sinless perfection is daily experienced."

Dr. Adam Clarke says (*Christian Theology*, pp. 182, 183): "This perfection is the restoration of man to the state of holiness from which he fell, by creating him anew in Christ Jesus and restoring to him that image and likeness of God which he has lost. A higher meaning than this it cannot have; a lower meaning it must not have. God made man in that degree of perfection which was pleasing to his own infinite wisdom and goodness. Sin defiled this divine image; Jesus came to restore it. Sin must have no triumph; and the Redeemer of mankind must have his glory. But if man be not perfectly saved from all sin, sin does triumph and Satan exult. . . . All sin . . . is the work of the devil, and he, Jesus, came to destroy the work of the devil; and as all unrighteousness is sin, so his blood cleanseth from all sin, because it cleanseth from all unrighteousness."

Richard Watson, in his *Institutes* (vol. ii, pp. 450, 453, 455), treating of "entire sanctification, or the perfected holiness of believers," speaks of it as "our complete deliverance from all spiritual pollution, all inward depravation of the heart," "deliverance from all in-

ward and outward sin," "perfect freedom from sin."

Coming to some of the more modern writers, we find Dr. George Peck, in his *Scripture Doctrine of Christian Perfection* (p. 65), holding that Christian perfection, or entire sanctification, does not imply "a perfect fulfillment of the requirements of the Adamic law," but that we are saved from "all violations of the requirements of the law of love."

Bishop Foster, in the revised edition of his *Christian Purity* (p. 128), speaking of the soul in "consummated holiness" or entire sanctification, says: "The propensities will no longer rebelliously strive with the conscience, no longer have undue power, like a frenzied patient, but, remaining and becoming restored to their right condition, will ask only their normal indulgence and exercise; as was their primeval design, will awaken only appropriate desires and lead to their appropriate effects. Just that, and no more." In his more recent *Philosophy of Christian Experience* he says: "An ethically perfect soul is one which perfectly knows its law and perfectly obeys it; a soul whose intellect unerringly discerns between things which ought to be and those which ought not to be; a soul delicately sensitive to slightest approach of evil or wrong. . . .

It is perfectly obvious that this ideal has never been reached by any but one man on the earth. It was reached by Jesus of Nazareth. . . . The impossible ideal is not what is required by the eternal ethical law. That which is required of the human soul is the nearest approach possible, . . . possible not to itself alone by its own unaided power, but as nearly as possible with all available helps at its command" (pp. 139, 140). "Average Christian experience is not unalloyed. It is not the experience of an ideally perfect soul. There are none such on earth, and never will be" (p. 151). "By common consent a damage has come to the soul by sin that in some respects is irreparable while it remains in the body" (p. 159). "As a principle governing the life, we are bold to say, love may and should abide moment by moment and without alloy. That is all God wants; that is moral perfection" (p. 162).

Bishop Merrill, in his *Aspects of Christian Experience*, says: "Some hold that redemption will lift us to the height from which he [man] fell; but that consummation will require resurrection power. . . . None of us look for 'sinless perfection' in this life. . . . While we may live in such intimate companionship with the Holy One that we shall not willfully commit sin, we shall be so encompassed with the limi-

tations of our understanding and the infirmities of our being that the word 'sinless' will not apply to our highest possible development" (pp. 227, 228). "So long as we live we will be doing things that ought not to be done and leaving undone things that ought to be done. Nor will all our mistakes be innocent. Many of them will or may be harmful to ourselves and others. In some we shall be blameworthy. More attention, warmer love, less selfishness—all possible—would have saved the wrong inflicted. We shall, therefore, always need forgiveness" (pp. 229, 230). "Purity is not perfection" (p. 234). "Maturity, which is the same thing as perfection, comes from that development of the inward life of the soul which the Scriptures call growth" (p. 235).

Dr. Daniel Curry said, in a carefully prepared essay, read at the New York Preachers' Meeting and published in *The Christian Advocate*, "Christian maturity, manhood, ripeness, is the proper and legitimate sense of the New Testament word 'perfection.'"

Dr. Daniel Steele, in *Love Enthroned*, makes the following definitions: "Evangelical perfection, which is nothing but inward sincerity and uprightness of heart toward God" (p. 12). "Perfect love, by which we mean love in a degree commensurate with the utmost capacity

of the soul" (p. 39). In *Milestone Papers* (p. 127) he says: "All that I am required to do is to love God with the full measure of my present powers, crippled and dwarfed by original and actual sin. When I do this I am perfect in love in the evangelical sense."

Dr. L. T. Townsend, in his *Elements of General and Christian Theology* (p. 66), says that Christians will not have attained perfection "until no experience, and no discipline, and no temptation, and no trial, and nothing they can do for themselves, and nothing God can do for them shall be able to make them answer any more perfectly than they now do the end for which God created them. When this condition is reached they are relatively as perfect as their Father who is in heaven; for, morally, he can do or be no better."

Dr. Miner Raymond, in the second volume of his *Systematic Theology*, after observing that "though entire sanctification is salvation from inbred sin and is, in a sense, completed salvation, it is not salvation from all of the inherited effects of the first transgression" (p. 381), and speaking of it as "maturity in Christian grace" (p. 375), further says: "We do not attempt what we regard as impossible, namely, a definite designation of that in which Christian perfection consists" (p. 383). Referring to Mr.

Wesley's definition of it as perfect love, he remarks: "As love is a variable quantity, as man's might, mind, and strength, or, in other words, his ability to love depends upon the extent and correctness of his antecedent knowledge, as we see it, Mr. Wesley's definition tells us where to find perfection, but does not give us a knowledge of what it is. Should it be said, as it sometimes is, that a man's love is perfect when he does his best, when he loves God all he can love in his present condition, we reply, This dodges the difficulty; it does not remove or solve it; it makes perfection consist of a series of acts, and not at all in a condition or status of the mind. . . . Simply doing one's best, then, whatever that best may be, is not Christian perfection" (pp. 383, 384).

Dr. D. D. Whedon, in his article in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* (April, 1862) on the "Doctrines of Methodism," says that Christian perfection is "a state in which all the normal qualities of the Christian are permanently, or with more or less continuity, possessed in the proper completeness." Twelve years later, defending his teachings upon the subject with great deliberateness in the *Methodist Quarterly Review*, he calls sanctification "such a measure of power over sin as holds us, with more

or less of continuity, in that same perfect fullness of divine approbation as rested upon us when justification first pronounced us through Christ perfectly innocent of sin" (October, 1874, p. 667).

Dr. John Miley, the latest authority, in the second volume of his *Systematic Theology*, says: "It is the definite work of entire sanctification to complete the subjective purification. . . . But the perfection or maturity of the Christian graces is not an immediate product of the subjective purification" (p. 357). "Sanctification, whether in part or in whole, is in the measure of the incoming and power of the Holy Spirit. It is entire when, through his presence and power, the evil tendencies are subdued and the dominance of the spiritual life is complete" (p. 365). "Christian perfection is, therefore, not a childhood attainment. . . . It belongs to adult believers" (p. 376).

Here, taken from a dozen standard authors, is certainly a large variety of forms of expression, which might be vastly increased by quotations from others of less prominence and ability. The seeker for truth cannot complain that he is shut up to one set of phrases or even ideas. Indeed, it will not be surprising if, as he meditates, he is thrown into no little perplexity. For he is told, on the one hand, that Christian

perfection is the restoration of the likeness of God lost at the fall, a restoration of all the powers and propensities of the soul to their normal or primitive condition; while, on the other hand, he is told that the effects of the first transgression are not to be removed at present, the damage is not wholly repaired, the works of the devil in man are not destroyed in this life. He is told by one that he is perfect if he loves God with all his present powers, whatever these may be—in other words, if he is sincere and does the best he can; but another assures him with equal positiveness that this cannot be called perfection. One tells him only he is perfect who has got where nothing can make him any better; but another is quite confident that this ethical or moral perfection is an impossible ideal not required by ethical law. Several give him the vague, indefinite word “maturity,” or fullness of growth, as the proper synonym for “perfection;” but a still larger number he finds insisting that, so far from reaching fullness or completeness of growth when he gets to be perfect, it is only then that he begins to grow with the most rapidity, or, in the language of the catechism, “They should still grow in knowledge and in grace, and improve faster than before.” A good many inform him that it is the fulfilling

of the law, without explaining what law they mean or what the law requires; they assert that it is deliverance from sin, but do not think it necessary to mention what they mean by sin; they declare that it is loving God with all the heart, might, mind, and strength, that is, with all the powers, but quite omit to say whether they mean all our present impaired powers or all the powers of the perfect man. Some say it is deliverance from sin, in the sense of voluntary transgression of the known law, and then, in the next breath, quietly declare that it is deliverance from all original sin or depravity of heart. The articles of religion say nothing whatever about it, although it is declared on all sides to be the chief and most distinctive doctrine of Methodism. And the standard catechism contents itself with the noncommittal truism that Christian perfection consists "in perfect love."

It seems to us as plain as day that, instead of clearness or certainty of doctrine, here is a monumental muddle. Yet there are plenty who assure us with the utmost emphasis that the Methodist Church is a unit in her belief on this matter, and that no departure from the standards can possibly be allowed or is compatible with honesty in any Methodist preacher. The simple fact is—and no progress can be

made until it is more generally understood and more firmly held in mind than it has been hitherto—that there are various kinds of perfection. The word is taken in different senses by the biblical writers, as well as by those of recent times, and sharp, close, careful discriminations are absolutely needful.

The most general sense of the word as used in the Bible is *mature, established, adult*. Noah was called “a righteous man, and perfect [margin, ‘blameless’] in his generations” (Gen. vi, 9). Job was called “a perfect and an upright man” (Job i, 8; ii, 3). “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright” (Psalm xxxvii, 37). “For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it” (Prov. ii, 21). The collocation of the two words, thus put in apposition in these and other Old Testament passages, sufficiently shows that “perfect” was taken in no exact signification, but was merely used to indicate that the man had an established character for moral excellence and integrity. Similarly, in the New Testament this is about the usual meaning, as one can see by consulting the contents of the principal passages. “That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (2 Tim. iii, 17). “Admonishing every man and teach-

ing every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ" (Col. i, 28). "For we rejoice, when we are weak, and ye are strong: this we also pray for, even your perfecting. . . . Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace" (2 Cor. xiii, 9, 11). Peter shows that he takes it thus loosely by saying, "The God of all grace . . . shall himself perfect, stablish, strengthen you" (1 Peter v, 10). Similarly Paul, in 1 Cor. ii, 6: "We speak wisdom among the perfect." Dr. Whedon's comment is, "The adult—for such is the meaning of the word 'perfect'—in Christ, and who are, therefore, called spiritual (verse 15), and who have attained a higher Christian life." The same commentator, in his note on 1 Cor. iii, 1, says, "'Babe' implies childhood; 'perfect' simply implies adulthood. . . . A perfect man in Christ Jesus is simply an adult man in Christ Jesus," which, indeed, the whole connection sufficiently shows. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews uses the word for adulthood in v, 14, vi, 1, which read: "Solid food is for full-grown [margin, 'perfect'] men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. Wherefore let us cease to speak of the first principles of Christ, and press on unto perfection [margin, 'full growth']." This is

probably Paul's meaning in Phil. iii, 15: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Alford defines the word "perfect," here as "mature in Christian life;" Conybeare renders it, "ripe in understanding;" and Wesley says, "fit for the race, strong in faith."

It will be at once evident that this loose, vague, and wholly inexact meaning of the term can be of no value in theology. It is a term for the people, but not for thinkers. It has no definite bounds. There is no point where it can be said to begin, no point where it can be said to end. Just when is maturity reached? Just what does maturity cover? This, at least, and perhaps this alone, is certain—it cannot be found near the beginning of the Christian life, because thoroughly developed powers are implied, as well as large experience and a process of growth involving considerable time. The babe does not jump into manhood in a night. It takes practice to make perfect in this sense. And nothing but practice can do it in matters that require our cooperation and are accomplished by voluntary action. Only that which is purely passive can be made perfect in a moment. He who is called a perfect workman at a job must have done that particular thing a great many times before, for it is not possible to do it as well in the earlier

stages as in the later. His mind and members have learned their obedience by the things which they have suffered—in other words, have become perfect through suffering, perfect through practice, which is the only way. And since to live as a Christian is to practice the precepts of Christ, to imitate the example he set in holy living, it is by the persevering practice of holy living that we may and must reach this kind of perfection.

So much would seem to be plain. But beyond this fact that time is required for ripening, the word “maturity” does not tell us much or convey any precise information. It is only very roughly and partially applicable to Christian experience. For fruit when it gets ripe begins to decay, and children when they are grown up stop growing; whereas in a normal Christian experience there is neither decay nor stopping. When we are told that Christian perfection is maturity we are left entirely in the dark as to most of the fundamental questions that surround the subject; we are told nothing as to its relation to law or to depravity or to love. Some knowledge, of course, is included, and some purity; but how much? The word itself gives no hint, and people may—nay, indeed, they must—use it as only a vague descriptive, sufficiently express-

ive to do service in common religious talk, along with such words as "sincere," "faithful," "honorable," "conscientious," "high-principled," "exemplary," and the like, but not suitable for close theological discussion.

It is true that John Fletcher adopts it as the principal word in his definition of Christian perfection, dwelling upon it very fondly and repeatedly, as though it were entirely satisfactory and sufficiently explicit. It is also true that Bishop Merrill, Dr. Curry, and Dr. Miley, as noted above, and many others, have followed him in this. But we can but think that in doing so they have simply furnished another illustration of what is so very common in all these writings, and what is fitly characterized by Dr. Raymond as "dodging the difficulty," instead of removing or solving it. A person may be rightly regarded by all around him as a mature, established believer, a full-grown Christian instead of a babe, might be so set down in any catalogue, and yet neither by others nor by himself nor by God be considered as either free from all depravity or even able to live a single month without more or less of sin.

Leaving, then, this sense of the word "perfect" as not concerning us much in these pages, we turn to the two other senses, each of them of high theological value, capable of

exact, clear-cut definition, but very different in their force. It has a lower and a higher meaning. There is a relative or comparative perfection, and there is a complete or positive perfection.

He is relatively perfect who is delivered from all sin, "sin" being taken, of course, as defined in chapter second. He is delivered from that which grieves the Spirit, defiles the conscience, and breaks the communion with God. He has no guilt or blameworthiness; he is free from condemnation; his duties are all done; he has made the divine will, so far as known, his own; he fulfills all the law which at present is binding upon him and, hence, may be called, in a very intelligible and wholly proper sense, sinless. It is a perfection which pertains to every child of God once at least in his life—that is, at the moment when he becomes a child. For it is universally agreed, we think, that a person cannot have his sins forgiven and be adopted into the divine family without making a surrender that is fully commensurate with his knowledge, without giving himself up to God the best he knows how. His consecration must be complete so far as light is granted him. If anything is willfully kept back, if there is any conscious disloyalty in his heart, he will not be accepted. He must be thor-

oughly willing to do everything that God bids, and, so far as it is a present bidding, he must immediately do it. This is the invariable condition of justification. Nothing less than this would be honorable for God or good for man. The Deity cannot descend to dicker, cannot compromise, cannot take less than all. The young convert, then, is in full and perfect favor with his new-found Father, and retains this undiminished sense of approbation so long as he presses steadily on, answering promptly and completely to every accession of light.

The perfection here described is called relative because it has strict relation to knowledge—that is, to the knowledge of God's law or will and what its requirements concerning us are. This knowledge may be little or large. In the case of most young converts it is probably very small. This does not matter so far as the full performance of present duty is concerned, for what they do not know and cannot now know is not duty. Thorough loyalty and the faithful carrying out of all orders received meet all demands. Such a one will, of course, love God with all his present powers, for this also is a part of present duty and is the soul's sufficient prompter of complete obedience. He will love God with heart and soul and mind and strength, to the full extent of which

he is now capable. His affections will not be divided, his allegiance will be unshared by anything below the supreme throne. All selfishness or evil that is discerned or recognized to be such by our poorly developed powers, injured by our inheritance from Adam and through sinful ancestors, as well as by our personal transgressions, will be resolutely refrained from. Nothing consciously contrary to love will be cherished. All that we ought to do and nothing that we ought not to do will be done. And we shall be all that we ought and nothing that we ought not.

Such a man is perfect in the lower sense. And there is certainly a propriety in styling perfect him who has such power from above as that he maintains a state of undiminished fullness of acceptance with God, a state of gracious guiltlessness, or freedom from condemnation. He has attained the normal completeness of his class or kind; the normal qualities of the normal Christian are possessed by him in proper fullness.

It will not be difficult to see how very great must be the difference between this man, who is perfect in a merely relative or comparative sense, and one who is perfect in a complete or positive sense. The latter is delivered, not merely from all sin, but from all depravity,

which is another thing altogether. He is delivered, not merely from such selfishness as his weakened powers may be able to discern, but from all selfishness of every sort, as the infinitely wise God sees it. His love is not simply with the enfeebled powers which he may happen to have just now, as he is, battered and bruised more or less by sin, but with powers fitted to fulfill completely the object for which he was created. Such a one has recovered the whole image of God, to use Wesley's language, his soul has been restored to its primitive health and original purity, he has all the mind that was in Christ, and he walks uniformly as Christ walked. In the words of Bishop Foster already quoted, "The propensities will no longer rebelliously strive with the conscience, no longer have undue power, like a frenzied patient, but, remaining and becoming restored to their right condition, will ask only their normal indulgence and exercise."

When will this be, and where? Not now or here, but in another world than this, when we shall have laid aside these enfeebled and enfeebling bodies which compel us to err. This, we believe, is the practically unanimous opinion of Christian thinkers; but they have so many different ways of expressing it that their agreement is not always understood to be as

general as it is. John Wesley is particularly strong in his assertions about this, as may be seen by anyone who reads the *Plain Account*. He says: "I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes till this mortal puts on immortality. I believe this is to be a natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now think at all but by the mediation of those bodily organs which have suffered equally, with the rest of our frame. And, hence, we cannot avoid sometimes thinking wrong, till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption" (p. 63). "A mistake in opinion may occasion a mistake in practice. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law" (p. 64). "I believe there is no such perfection in this life as excludes these involuntary transgressions, which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality" (p. 67). "It is as natural for a man to mistake as to breathe, and he can no more live without the one than the other; consequently no man is able to perform the service which the Adamic law requires. And no man is obliged to perform it" (p. 108). "Even these souls dwell in a shattered body and are so pressed down thereby that they cannot always exert themselves as they would by thinking,

speaking, and acting precisely right. For want of better bodily organs they must at times think, speak, or act wrong, not, indeed, through a defect of love, but through a defect of knowledge" (p. 116). He also says, near the close of his sermon on "The End of Christ's Coming" (*Sermons*, vol. ii, p. 73): "The Son of God does not destroy the whole work of the devil in man as long as he remains in this life. He does not yet destroy bodily weakness, sickness, pain, and a thousand infirmities incident to flesh and blood. He does not destroy all that weakness of understanding which is the natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in a corruptible body. . . . He intrusts us with only an exceedingly small share of knowledge, lest our knowledge should interfere with our humility and we should again affect to be as gods."

This is very explicit and very well put. We do not know that anyone is disposed to object to it. We think the best writers of our own day are in full accord with these ideas. Dr. Miner Raymond, in his *Systematic Theology* (vol ii, pp. 381-383), has stated the matter very clearly, and may stand as a fair representative of many. He says: "Entire sanctification . . . is not salvation from *all* the inherited effects of the first transgression; it is a com-

plete salvation, but not complete in the sense of being a full restoration to original righteousness. . . . The inherited effects of the fall, as to man's physical nature, will not be entirely removed until the resurrection from the dead; nor will all of the inherited effects of the fall as to man's intellectual nature be entirely removed until the saint is glorified in heaven; and as man's moral and religious natures are conditioned directly upon his physical and intellectual natures, and indirectly upon his earthly surroundings, it is reasonable to infer that some traces of the inherited results of the first sin will remain in these latter natures till man is released from the conditions and limitations of his earthly state and is, body, soul, and spirit, prepared for and admitted to his heavenly estate. . . . Traces of the fall remain in man's physical, intellectual, moral, and religious natures till glorification in heaven removes them." Dr. Whedon similarly says, "Our inherent depravity is not entirely removed by regeneration until the regeneration is completed at the resurrection" (*Statements: Theological and Critical*, p. 320).

All this being true—since for want of better bodily organs we must more or less of the time think, speak, or act wrong, since we cannot perfectly keep the moral law, which has

not been lowered a particle as a standard of right since first given to Adam, since depravity, or that disordered condition of our propensities and powers entailed upon humanity by the fall, is not to be removed this side the grave, while it is quite possible for us and an ever present duty to be kept from sinning—the necessity for careful discrimination in our statements and professions must be evident to all. The lack of the former has brought almost all the writers on this theme into more or less violent conflict with themselves. The lack of the latter has brought into disgust with intelligent people a doctrine which, rightly set forth, is one of the chief glories of our Church.

The two questions, “May believers be kept in this life from the commission of sin?” and “May believers be delivered in this life from all depravity?” should never be confounded. To the former the answer is, “Yes;” to the latter, “No.” If these two kinds of perfection—the lower and the higher; the one up to present light, and the other up to all possible light; the one a service of God with our dwarfed, crippled powers, whatever at any moment they may be, with little or no maturity, little or no knowledge, and the other with fully developed powers and complete maturity and absolute Christlikeness of life—had been

in the past century of discussion kept apart, most of the discussion would have been forestalled and prevented. But as neither Wesley nor Fletcher did it, it is not so much to be wondered at that their followers of smaller caliber failed to do it.

John Wesley, speaking of those who exemplify Christian perfection, who "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks," "whose souls are continually streaming up to God in holy joy, prayer, and praise," says, "Even these souls . . . must at times think, speak, or act wrong; not, indeed, through a defect of love, but through a defect of knowledge" (*Plain Account*, p. 116); in other words, the perfect are saved from sin, but not from depravity. And then, a few pages further on, speaking of some who did things which, tried by the highest, most mature standards of humility, temperance, gentleness, and resignation, must be set down as wrong, but which certainly might be done innocently by those less mature, he says, "You have not what I call perfection" (p. 132). Plainly, here the being saved from absolutely all transgressions is not discriminated from the being saved only from conscious intentional transgressions. The meaning to do right is confounded with the actual doing of the right.

Some things which pertain, strictly, only to those who are perfect in the higher sense are carried over and unfairly demanded of those who are perfect in the lower sense and who, failing to do them, are summarily declared not to be perfect at all. The perfection of loyalty to God, which every young convert has and every one who is not a young convert may attain by a leap at once, is inextricably mixed up with the perfection of great ripeness of character and judgment, which a babe in Christ cannot have and which must be attained gradually by growth.

If the distinction between these two kinds of perfection had been observed the perpetual wrangle which breaks out ever and anon as to where to set the standard would be wholly obviated. They who set it very high and they who set it very low have both been bitterly complained about, and not without reason. They were both wrong and both right, because there are properly two standards. They who held to the higher one made assertions about it only true of the lower one; and they who set forth the lower one as correct made assertions about that which could be made in strict accuracy only of the higher. In the higher sense, Christ alone is the standard of perfection; and he who has any lower standard than

Christ to aim at is sure to go astray or, at least, to make small progress and imbibe erroneous ideas. He will not be likely to realize the normal possibilities of humanity. In the lower sense, perfect sincerity or purity of intention, thorough goodness of will, is the standard; and he who continually comes up to this lives happily and puts to shame a very large proportion of the Church members. It is a standard so much higher than that commonly reached by those who pass for Christians that there is much excuse for people who do not look into matters deeply for supposing it to be as high a standard as is needed.

We have sought in vain for names simple, distinctive, convenient, adequately expressive, and perfectly satisfactory, wherewith to designate these two kinds of perfection, which, in a general way, we have termed lower and higher. Some adopt for the former the term "evangelical perfection," calling the latter "legal perfection." But these terms we do not like, because of their manifest ambiguity and erroneous implications. All kinds of perfection attainable by man since the fall are under evangelical or gospel provisions, are the fruits of the atonement, and are reached and held only in humble dependence on Christ; they have, therefore, a right to the name "evan-

gelical," and would be misrepresented by being dubbed "legal," although, of course, some law in all cases whatsoever is understood to be fulfilled. "Relative" and "absolute," although applicable in an important sense, would not quite do; because in another important sense all human perfection is always relative and looks toward an indefinite development in the knowledge and likeness of God, and the only ideally absolute or absolutely ideal perfection belongs, of course, exclusively to God. "Sinless perfection" would very strictly describe what we have called "lower perfection," because it is, in an accurate sense, deliverance from all sin; but the word "sinless" has got into bad odor and would be sure to be misunderstood. Moreover, it has no corresponding term implying deliverance from all depravity. "Moral perfection," "Christian perfection," and "human perfection" are also phrases too comprehensive and ambiguous to be of much avail. "Temporal, or earthly, perfection" and "eternal, or resurrectional, perfection" might possibly answer, as indicating, on the one hand, that which is possible here in this world, and, on the other, that which can only be attained in heaven after the natural body is exchanged for the spiritual. But the words are awkward and could not be brought into general use.

In short, no words discovered seem to be just the thing. Bishop Jesse T. Peck, in his *Central Idea of Christianity* (pp. 56-58), speaks of "two kinds of perfection, one in character, another in development;" adding that development "must go on in an increased ratio forever," while "perfection in character must be secured in this life." Bishop Ezekiel Hopkins, of the Church of England, also says, "There is a twofold perfection, a perfection of the work, and that of the workman." But neither of these bishops has enriched us with terms that will bear close scrutiny. Perhaps none such can be found. But the difficulty, if it cannot be obviated, may be in part evaded, we would suggest, by speaking more of the perfect Christian than of Christian perfection; and the perfect Christian may easily be treated of under two heads, "the ideal Christian" and "the loyal Christian," the first being wholly Christlike, and the second simply faithful to his present light, and, hence, allowing for all grades of knowledge or goodness, his perfection being liable to have a very limited and imperfect character.

Another way of evading the difficulty is to drop out, as much as possible in ordinary speech, the troublesome word "perfection," and speak simply of freedom or deliverance from all sin, on

the one hand and freedom or deliverance from all depravity, on the other. But in this case it would often be necessary for perfect clearness, in view of the history of the discussion, to expressly exclude any reference to a recognition of so-called "original sin," and to state that deliverance from sin means the acquirement of power perfectly to resist all temptation, and so with absolute continuity to observe all duties. As was seen in chapter second, this, when properly understood, covers a great deal more than is commonly meant, and the profession of it would, perhaps, rarely be ventured if the full scope and bearing of the word were taken in.

When it is said, "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin," and "He that doeth sin is of the devil," with similar strong expressions which may be found both in Scripture and in less inspired writings, the meaning manifestly is that no child of God deliberately and habitually sins. Just as not everything which on strict construction would have to be called a departure from exact truth constitutes a man a liar or would take him out of the category of truthful men, so not everything which partakes of the nature of sin, not every failure to make the swiftest possible progress toward the goal of entire Christlikeness, forfeits sonship or de-

prives a man of his place in the family of God. The offenses and trespasses of the living child are very different from the hostile acts of an enemy; but still they are trespasses or, in other words, sins. Being in a state of sin is quite different from failing to reach a state of perfect deliverance from sin. Between complete sinfulness and complete sinlessness there is a very wide intermediate space, filled up with an almost endless number of gradations. And the exact settlement of any one's individual position in this scale of approximate sinlessness is a far more delicate and difficult matter than most people suppose. The ordinary rude and crude classification betrays entire ignorance of the primary conditions of the problem.

The expression used above, that complete deliverance from sin must be understood to mean the acquirement of power to observe all duties with absolute continuity, differs, it will be noted, from Dr. Whedon's, quoted a few pages back, in that he would substitute for the words "absolute continuity" the phrase "more or less of continuity." We cannot think that the great review editor grasped this subject with the clearness that characterized most of his theological discussions. In the *Methodist Quarterly Review* for July, 1874

(p. 491), he calls "the avoidance of such sin as diminishes the light of God's smile upon us" entire sanctification. This leaves us to infer that there is a sort of sin which we can commit without displeasing God—a proposition that seems to the present writer monstrous. He calls the state of freedom from depravity Adamic perfection and makes it differ from entire sanctification, showing that he takes the latter term in what we have called the lower sense, a freedom from sin in its strict significance, as distinct from depravity or "original sin." Then he makes a still higher degree of perfection than freedom from all depravity, to be reached at the resurrection, and makes our holiness to be "finitely absolute" at that point. "Then for the first moment the impairment we, one and all, have derived from Adam and sin shall be completely repaired." Our view puts this complete repairment as equivalent to the removal of all depravity and the restoration of Adamic perfection. And so does Dr. Whedon in other places, even on the following page, where he writes as follows: "We think it accords with Wesleyan theology to say, that the amissibility of even the most entire sanctification in our probationary life is based in a 'residue' of our hereditary moral debility. Just because it is part of the great racial im-

pairment waiting the great racial repairment. And just because, also, it is such a correlation of the soul with temptation, belonging to our nature, inherited from the fall, as leaves us, as Mr. Wesley repeatedly states, inferior to Adamic perfection. Whatever inferiority we possess below unfallen Adam must be part of that loss we have suffered from fallen Adam." (P. 492.) This is true. Therefore, this loss or impairment from Adam, which we commonly call depravity, when removed at the resurrection will give us Adamic perfection.

Why, then, does Dr. Whedon confuse his readers by inventing a stage somewhere between entire sanctification and glorification which he calls deliverance from all depravity, or Adamic perfection? Instead of making, as he does in the above article (see also *Methodist Quarterly Review*, October, 1874, p. 683), "five degrees of spiritual power over sin," namely, that seen in entire depravity, in partial depravity, in entire sanctification, in Adamic perfection, where there is no depravity; and in the resurrection state, where there is complete repairment of the impairment derived from Adam, we say there are properly but three degrees, namely, first, entire depravity, before conversion; second, partial depravity, after conversion and on through this earthly life;

third, entire deliverance from depravity, or entire sanctification in the true full sense, after our departure from this world. This threefold division is clear. The fivefold division is very cloudy. It is to the second of these three stages that should be applied Dr. Whedon's words, "Such a measure of power over sin as holds us, with more or less continuity, in that same perfect fullness of divine approbation as rested upon us when justification first pronounced us, through Christ, perfectly innocent of sin." But to call this intermittent condition, as he does, entire sanctification, without any modification of the adjective, naturally and justly provokes strong dissent. A person is not living in the fullness of the divine favor when he is not successfully resisting temptation; and to speak of him as entirely sanctified at that time is a very singular form of speech.

Dr. Whedon says (*Methodist Quarterly Review*, October, 1874, p. 667), "The permanent continuity of absolute justification (which is guilelessness, evangelical sinlessness) would be the highest sanctification." But this cannot be admitted as at all satisfactory, since it gives us a highest sanctification compatible with any amount of remaining depravity, provided only that the depravity, through immaturity and

ignorance, has not become chargeable upon us as guilt. This theory would give us the crudest kind of saints as exponents of the "highest sanctification." He similarly says in his commentary (Rev. iii, 19): "The acceptance is as perfect as it was at the moment when first our sins were swept away and we were justified from all sin. And now sanctification, holiness, or what is sometimes called entire sanctification, is the power, through the Spirit, of retaining with more or less permanence that state of complete acceptance, without a cloud between the soul and Christ."

But if the retention of complete acceptance is for only a part of the time, what can that be called but partial acceptance and, hence, partial sanctification? Every child of God is sometimes in full acceptance with his Lord—then he overcomes temptation and does his whole duty. To call him entirely sanctified, when it is only with "more or less permanence" than he might and ought that he merits God's favor, does not seem to us admissible. Dr. Whedon does excellently well in bringing out the point that the degrees of sanctification attained consist in degrees of power. He rightly objects to Wesley's declaration that entire sanctification is simply power "always to cleave to God." We, likewise, object to Whedon's

declaration that it is power to retain, "with more or less continuity," perfect fullness of divine approbation. It seems to us much better to say that the highest degree of sanctification, or Christian perfection, is the power to hold permanently our lower faculties in perfectly normal subjection to the higher, so that reason and conscience will rule us as easily and completely as they were originally designed to do.

It also seems to us much better to speak of different kinds of perfection than, as some do, of different degrees of perfection; for perfection is in itself a superlative, a finality, an arrival at the goal. In that respect in which a thing has attained completion it cannot be more complete; if the fruit is ripe it can be no riper. There may be different stages or degrees of unripeness. So there may be different stages or degrees of imperfection, or, in other words, degrees of approach to perfection. A thing may be perfect in one particular or aspect, while not in another, as a fruit may be perfect in flavor, but not in shape. So, in whatsoever particular a man is perfect, in that particular there can be no further increase. The degrees have been left behind. The phrase appears to be chiefly in vogue with those who identify perfection and maturity. There certainly are degrees of maturity, as the word is

commonly taken, in its loose, vague sense. But when "perfection" is employed with the strictness which properly belongs to the word in theological discussion it is not proper to speak of it as having degrees. It is similarly inappropriate to talk of degrees in entire purity or entire sanctification, since the entireness is that to which the degrees lead up.

The question whether entire sanctification is possible in this life can never be answered satisfactorily or intelligently without a specification of the sense in which the term is to be taken. Sanctification being to make holy, entire sanctification will be to make entirely or perfectly holy—in other words, to produce a condition wherein the perfect love of God completely controls everything. The same two meanings, lower and higher, which we have explained with reference to perfection exist here with reference to entire sanctification, a phrase of precisely similar compass. The sanctification, or cleansing, or empowering, is entire or perfect at conversion up to the light then given, so that when justified every person is in the relative or comparative sense entirely sanctified. And whenever, at any subsequent point, after a season of retrogression he comes fully up to his light and once more walks in unclouded communion he becomes again entirely

sanctified, in this lower sense. Entire sanctification, in the higher or absolute sense, where something more than the partial knowledge and inferior, undeveloped powers of the young convert come in, where, indeed, complete knowledge and the powers of unfallen humanity are implied, must, as with the higher perfection, tarry till another life.

Many Methodist theologians vent a great deal of uncalled-for scorn and sarcasm on those who hold that we cannot be sanctified in the fullest sense until the body has been dropped off, charging us with believing in a death purgatory, a heathen philosophy, and the inherent evil of matter and with substituting something else for the blood of Christ as the proper purifier of the soul. All this is wholly beside the mark and comes from confounding things that differ. As is seen by the quotation a few pages back, they really attack John Wesley himself, although far from meaning so to do; for he says that our souls are so pressed down by these shattered bodies that they cannot in this life always think, speak, or act aright. Hence, there is a degree of salvation that cannot come to us until we shake off the body. A greater than Wesley has declared the same things, even the mighty apostle to the Gentiles, who, in Rom. viii, 19-25, fully explains that

“the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God,” for that time when “the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For by hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” This can mean nothing but that we are not yet any of us fully saved and, in the largest meaning of the term, not yet completely redeemed, not yet made perfectly whole, not yet, in the complete or absolute sense, entirely sanctified. But this great fact by no means reflects upon the power of Christ, minifies the efficacy of his blood, or gives any aid to the peculiar doctrines of Romanism. All such talk shows superficial thinking. Death is not the means of our deliverance, as though power were attributed to it, but it is the occasion. God’s alone is the power. But it is not irreverence to say such are the necessities of the

case that he cannot do for us in this life what he purposes to do in another.

It will, perhaps, be sufficiently evident from this what we mean when we say that our whole Christian life on earth should be one of progressive sanctification. That is the proper term for characterizing all the path between the sanctification which marks the entrance on the Christian life and the entire sanctification which marks the close of the earthly Christian life and the entrance on the heavenly. It is quite within our power to be always fully sanctified in the lower sense, according to the knowledge of God's will at any time possessed, and to be making continual advance in this knowledge, as also in the knowledge of our own heart, and so to be growing in holiness. We shall thus have the apparent anomaly of something which is completed and progressing at the same time; but, of course, this cannot be in the same sense. For in whatsoever particulars sanctification is complete, in these particulars its progress has ceased. So far as selfishness or depravity to any degree remains and is being steadily diminished, by the cooperation of the divine and human agents that are warring against it, so far and so long our sanctification is progressing, not having yet reached its goal.

That goal can be nothing less than entire Christlikeness, even as Paul so distinctly intimates in Eph. iv, 12-15—a most important passage which we have already referred to for another purpose. He tells us there that the “perfecting of the saints,” in other words, “the building up of the body of Christ,” is to go on until we attain “unto a full-grown [or perfect] man,” that is “unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,” or unto the full stature of Christ, who is the perfect man, till we “grow up in all things unto him.” This is the same as to say that we are to grow or progress till we each become a full formed Christ, till we reach complete similarity to him, our Pattern and Head. That this will not be until we pass up to glory and—seeing him for the first time as he is, because then for the first time capable of the beatific vision—become, as St. John declares, fully like him, it needs no argument to prove.

But, though this blessed ideal we may not expect fully to realize here below, it is none the less our duty and our delight to press forward toward it with ever eager stride. The healthy normal Christian life is a perpetual forward march, on from the beginning point of conversion to the glorious consummation in the skies. Our enlightenment as to God’s holy

will concerning us and our apprehension of the wonders of divine love continually increase. And, as they increase, Christ is more completely formed within us, and the self-life correspondingly diminishes. Thus, there is never any standing still. It is less and less of self, more and more of Christ, all the time. Each day, no doubt, to the divine eye shows a difference, as in the springtime growth each day of the grass ; but to our duller faculties longer periods are necessary to reveal the progress. So we go on, on, on, steadily, grandly progressing ; perfect all the time in the lower sense—this at least is possible—yet pressing forward to that higher perfection which involves fullness of knowledge, and so fullness of growth ; loving God the whole time with all our poor dwarfed powers, but gaining new powers daily with which to love him better ; entirely sanctified each week up to the light and strength then given, but conscious that our sanctification is unceasingly progressing, nevertheless. Miss Havergal has voiced the paradox in her familiar rhymes,

Perfect, yet it floweth
Fuller every day ;
Perfect, yet it groweth
Deeper all the way.

There is but little excuse for anyone's failing

to recognize that this prize of entire Christlikeness, this full apprehension of God's love which passeth our present power of knowledge, is at the end of the race, at the resurrection, since Paul has so plainly expressed the thought, in that brilliant passage (Phil. iii, 8-14), whose glowing words have filled the heart of the Church ever since they were penned, where he pours out his passionate desire fully to know Christ and "the power of his resurrection, . . . if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Toward this same prize, this glorious perfection, every true Christian is pressing, getting ever nearer to it, getting as near to it day by day as is possible, drinking in more and more of the unutterable fullness of the divine Lord. In no other way can he be entirely acceptable with God.

CHAPTER V.

Growth.

CHRISTIAN growth, increase, advancement, progress (we shall make no discrimination between these terms), has been, of course, more or less touched upon in the previous chapters. But several important questions having close connection with this general topic still remain to be treated, and it seems convenient to arrange them under this general heading.

Probably everybody believes that there is no time in our Christian life when we should not give heed to the command of the apostle, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." A stopping place where there is no more beyond, where we can simply rest content with past attainments and give ourselves up to spiritual ease, does not, we suppose, definitely enter into the arrangements of any intelligent Christian. But some theories of the Christian life do seem, in practice, to promote the feeling that about everything of consequence has been obtained and that self-con-

gratulation is the main thing in order for the rest of one's days.

This weakness of what has come to be called the "second blessing" theory has impressed very many. It makes no suitable provision for perpetual advance, it offers no goal of attainment, no clearly marked line of progress beyond the easily grasped joys of the "blessing;" and in circles where this doctrine mostly prevails one is speedily conscious of a very great lack as to sturdy, intelligent grappling with the marked defects of character that stand out on every side. As one of the foremost minds of our Church has expressed it, "There is a good deal that is artificial in our popular Methodist notions of religious experience. When they originated they were intelligible through the errors they were meant to deny; but when taken by themselves as an expression of unsophisticated experience they leave much to be desired. They are about equally out in both psychology and in exegesis. Religion, which ought of all things to be real and sincere, is befogged with words and phrases and artificial prescriptions; and there is real danger that our adherence to traditional forms, in oversight of the essential thing, will lead to our falling behind the other Churches in genuine, natural piety." The conviction that this is literal and

solemn truth has led to the preparation of the present volume, with the hope that some light might thus be given to the many honest, earnest souls who have taken up with the popular notions because there seemed to be nothing better and they promise much, but have found the promise not wholly fulfilled, and so are now groping in a good deal of darkness.

What is the truth, what the error, concerning the second blessing theory of entire sanctification, as commonly taught? We are not of those who deem it altogether erroneous or altogether correct. And the errors spring, we imagine, more from a careless, unintelligent, wholly heterogeneous use of terms than from any other source. We wholly agree with the good brethren who are leading in this movement, that the great mass of the members of our Churches are in a very unsatisfactory condition and need a further work of purification wrought upon their hearts; that it is their privilege and duty to be living, day by day, a life without conscious condemnation and with the fullness of love governing all their words and actions. We further agree that, in order for them to reach this most desirable state, a crisis must in most cases be brought on, very similar to what they went through at conversion. In other words, as they "received Christ Jesus the

Lord " they must " walk in him." They must repent of their sins ; for sins they have certainly been committing in living so far below their acknowledged privilege and refusing so many of their admitted duties. They must make a complete confession of everything they know. It is true, they did this when their sins were first pardoned ; but they are in a position now to do it much more thoroughly and effectually. They know a great deal more than they did then ; the daily discipline of life has shown them their weaknesses ; the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths of the law of God have become much more fully revealed to them ; light from a hundred sources has been thrown upon the depravities of their heart. So their consecration now can be a great deal more detailed and complete. The territory was, in a sense, all made over to God originally ; but it has now been better explored, its resources are more largely known, and hence a renewed transference of the title deeds has much more significance.

This deeper consecration being thus most carefully and solemnly made, it only remains, as in the beginning, to believe that God accepts that which is given, receives the penitent offerer, who is at the same time the offering, into a new and tenderer relation, and fully empowers him

for all the service to which the eager suppliant will certainly be called. Thus resting in this comfortable assurance, all his anxieties, which were inseparable from a partial consecration and an imperfect faith, being at an end, he has perfect peace, abiding joy, and meetness for the Master's use. This will be a momentous era in his life, an epoch from which he will very naturally date as being almost a fresh conversion. It will be a new start, a strong departure, which will put an end, for a while at least, to the old zigzaggery, the perpetual ups and downs, which have been so humiliating or, at any rate, so disgraceful to himself and so painful to his Lord.

In the promotion of such new departures as this, and in the insistence that nothing short of this can be considered a normal Christian life, we think a good work is being done. And if this were all, the very serious evils referred to in the first chapter as attending the movement would not exist. The fact that they do exist and call for strenuous opposition is proof that other elements have entered into the movement which should not receive our sanction. What are they? The main trouble is that, through lack of comprehending what it is which gives occasion for the second blessing, the received teaching is that this blessing is a finality

entirely removing all of depravity left after regeneration. For this there is not a particle of proof, either in Scripture or reason. The passages usually quoted from the Bible do not bear upon the subject. The straining and twisting which they are put through to make it appear as though they had some relevancy and were, indeed, thoroughly conclusive is one of the worst features of this theory, and begets a habit of "handling the word of God deceitfully," than which nothing can be more mischievous. We have already mentioned the prevalent misapprehensions regarding some of these passages. A few other common and prominent examples may be given.

Perhaps no verse is more frequently quoted and with an air of greater triumph in this discussion than the one in 1 Thess. iv, 3, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." Here a full pause is made, although there is only a comma in the Bible. And thus there is an effort to conceal the fact, perfectly obvious to him who reads the whole paragraph, that the sanctification referred to, as the rest of the sentence shows, is "that ye abstain from fornication" and wrong not your brethren by meddling lewdly with their wives; "for God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification." What, pray, has this to do with deliv-

erance by a second blessing from the least and last remains of depravity, or the carnal mind? The brethren addressed in this exhortation would have to advance a long way before they would be in a condition to comprehend much about so lofty a theme. But this is a very fair specimen of the proofs that are given us from the Scripture, even in standard books by very eminent authors. It would seem as if they must have deliberately taken leave, for the time, of their intellects, deeming it improper to use them on so spiritual a subject.

To quote one other text, as a fair specimen out of many (for we have no room to take up a large number), perhaps none is more frequently thundered in the ears of congregations, as if settling everything beyond dispute, than the words of the apostle in Heb. xii, 14, "Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification [or holiness] without which no man shall see the Lord." Here also, as in several other places, the connection shows that fornication was in the mind of the author as the opposite of sanctification; and there is no ground whatever for supposing that the sanctification referred to is any other than that general cleansing or empowering which all the Church of God receive when they are born of the Holy Spirit, and which makes them heirs of heaven and fits

them to "see the Lord." Jesus says that the pure in heart "shall see God," using precisely the same word for "pure" which is found in John xv, 3, with reference to the disciples when he declares, "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you." It is plainly a general term, perfectly applicable to all believers who do already see God in a measure proportionate to the purity already attained, and who shall increasingly see him as they become increasingly pure. There is not the remotest hint in it of a second blessing that shall take away all depravity. The "follow" or "follow after" is used, of course, in a metaphorical sense, and means simply to continue to pursue the course indicated in the words succeeding. It is the same expression precisely as is found in Rom. xiv, 19, "Let us follow after things which make for peace;" 1 Cor. xiv, 1, "Follow after love;" 1 Tim. vi, 11, "Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness;" 2 Tim. ii, 22, "Follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart"—where no one, we presume, would think of suggesting that Timothy and the rest were directed to seek something which they had not previously possessed.

The other passages usually quoted—such as

"Ye therefore shall be perfect," "Be ye yourselves also holy," "Sanctify yourselves," "The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly," "Sanctify them in the truth," "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit," "Let us . . . press on unto perfection"—are, like the ones already mentioned, purely general, with no notes of time whatever, and not the slightest suggestion in them of the peculiar doctrine to maintain which they have been so strenuously laid hold of. The command to love God with all the heart, usually considered conclusive as to the truth of the "second blessing" theory, manifestly means that we must love him with all our present powers. This, at least, is all that can be made out of it if it is to be considered as enjoining present duty. If it means with all the powers of the primitive man, then, like some other commands, it must be intended for future fulfillment. The Lord is never so unreasonable as to urge upon us the immediate attainment of that which necessarily requires time. The command, "In mind be men," for example, does not apply as a present obligation to boys. In short, the whole "second blessing" experience, as commonly taught, had no place or

trace in the Bible. The attempts to make out the time, for example, when Paul went through what is assumed to be the necessary regulation process are extremely ludicrous. The New Testament churches are nowhere separated by the apostles into the two distinct classes into which it is endeavored to separate all modern churches—classes known as the “merely justified” and the “sanctified.”

Two truths greatly need emphasizing in this connection. Their general acceptance and practical recognition would go far to correct the mistakes that have been made and to counteract or prevent the evils that have arisen. One is, that the whole necessity for the second blessing, so far as there is a necessity for it, arises from a failure to maintain the complete justification gained at the first blessing, by proceeding straight forward in a thoroughly regular, normal development of the Christian powers. If one should do this from the beginning—and who can say it is impossible and has not been done?—pressing rapidly forward without break, the depravity which remained with him when born again would be diminished as fast as God plans it to be, as fast as is compatible with the constitution of his being, and he will come under no condemnation at all as the weeks and months and years roll by. Every duty as soon

as presented will be done, and there will be no arrears accumulating which will need to be brought up with a struggle. Having given himself up to God at conversion as best he knew then, he will maintain that attitude of entire surrender; and as fast as anything further is revealed to him he will promptly give up that also. God will see to it that he is shown the further depths of his depravity as fast as his soul can bear, as fast as he is prepared to take advantage of the knowledge. All was not revealed at the start, because it would have simply overwhelmed and stunned, perplexed and paralyzed him; so only a portion was made manifest, larger or smaller according to circumstances, and this governs the degree of sanctification at that time imparted. He had sufficient to make a perfect start. Now all he needs is to go on walking in the light as it comes, maintaining from day to day full fellowship with the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost and being continually cleansed from all unrighteousness.

This is what the directions of the apostle clearly contemplated. And in it is found no place for, or mention of, a second blessing. This is called for only when there is a failure, as no doubt there generally is, to carry out this program, when the light advances faster than

the convert follows, and when obedience does not keep pace with privilege. Though the justification or adoption into God's family is not actually forfeited by deliberately transgressing a plain command, a multitude of little omissions and doubtful indulgences bring a cloud over one's spiritual sky and dim the brightness of his testimony.

And it is precisely this unfaithfulness to a greater or less degree—present and at least vaguely ^{star}recognized, though not always put in these words—this lack of sufficient prayerfulness and watchfulness, which gives occasion for the crisis and struggle known as the second blessing. It is simply a getting back to the first love and a doing of the first works. It is recovering the ground which had been lost by not pressing on with might and main before. It brings one again into the normal Christian life in which he was at the beginning—the Christian life rather than a higher life—in which it is his business now to make speedy advance, and out from which he will certainly fall again unless they thus steadily advance. Dr. Daniel Steele, in one place at least, fully indorses this view. Speaking of those who have entered upon the higher Christian life as passing out of servitude into the joyous freedom of sonship, he says: "It is true that all who

are born into the divine family are sons by adoption ; but many forget their sonship and begin to work for wages. They become legal in spirit, trusting to the merit of their works, and thus put a yoke upon their necks" (*Love Enthroned*, p. 359). It is this becoming legal, this going back to work for wages, and this putting on a yoke, all of which contravene the true idea of the Christian life with which, it may be assumed, they started in at first, which have made the overturning necessary.

The other truth referred to above is, that the very same reasons which made it impossible for God to sanctify the soul with an absolute entireness, that is, to remove all depravity, at conversion, continue to make it equally impossible for him to do this absolutely complete work at the second blessing. As we explained in chapter third, only a partial work was done at regeneration, because of the imperfection of the powers of the human factor, which permitted only a partial enlightenment and empowerment at that time. This same imperfection remains. Why this has been so generally overlooked or ignored we are at a loss to understand. It is hardly too much to say that it is the key of the whole situation.

But all the standard writers seem sublimely unaware that it exists. Can it be that they

deliberately choose to forget it? Bishop Peck is a fair representative of them all. In his *Central Idea of Christianity* (pp. 157-162), he argues that entire deliverance from the "lowest degree of impurity" and the least "remains of the carnal mind" is a privilege of all Christians in this life, because God must be both able and willing to do it; because "there are no limits to his power;" because "he abhors all sin;" because the plan of redemption, if a partial one, would be unworthy of God; because, if the spirit of man utterly loathes its inward depravity, there can be no "obstacle in the nature of man to the full triumph of Christ in the soul." Very similarly, Dr. Miley says (*Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 357) that the grace which, in regeneration, "so largely purifies our nature surely can wholly cleanse it. Hence, there is place for the doctrine of entire sanctification as an attainable blessing in the present life."

But it will be readily perceived that all these arguments, which turn exclusively on the power of God and ignore man's weakness, can be easily utilized by those who claim that a partial work at conversion is unworthy of God, since he hates sin and has all power, and since the soul at that point puts itself completely in God's hands to be dealt with as he pleases, longing to be brought into harmony at all

points with him. The soul can be no more willing at any subsequent time than it was then ; and God of course can be no more powerful. But the same limitations to his power which prevented him from sweeping away all depravity then will continue to prevent him from sweeping it away. The same lack of perfect enlightenment will interpose its hindrance to the absolute completion of the work at the second blessing which prevented it at the first blessing. In the year after conversion, or in the tenth or twentieth year, as the case may be, a man is somewhat more able to apprehend his needs and to take in the complete requirements of God's law, but not yet perfectly able. And we can intelligently and effectively consecrate only that which we know. In proportion to the immaturity and incompleteness of our knowledge will be the incompleteness of our consecration, measured by the absolute standard, and, hence, also the incompleteness of our sanctification. God's revelations to us have to be gradual. And a large part of these revelations comes usually through the school of suffering and the daily discipline of life's trials. The holiest of men have not hesitated to bear testimony to this. Alfred Cookman, in the last days of his life, said (*The Life of Alfred Cookman*, pp. 443, 406): "I used to maintain

that the blood was sufficient, but I am coming to know that tribulation brings us to the blood that cleanseth." "After the washing, or purifying, there are other processes used by the power or Spirit of God in smoothing and adorning and perfecting our characters."

It is surely a very great error to maintain, as so many do, that the highest Christian experiences can be attained at any time by mere faith, and that he is derelict in duty, in other words, commits sin, who fails to exercise such faith or refuses to attempt to exercise it. Trial is necessary to develop the Christian. Patient endurance of that which the Father sends upon us gives a sweetness and depth to the character which no amount of mere faith can bestow, and brings upon us, not so much a second blessing, as repeated blessings that wonderfully increase our likeness to that Master who "learned obedience by the things which he suffered" and became "perfect through sufferings." As men are constituted, the utmost possible death of self can only come as the final result of a very long process, a process for which life itself is not found too extended.

Hence, to prematurely conclude that there is an absolutely complete consecration and sanctification at the second blessing, as is so often done, can but work harm in exaggerated pro-

fessions and the cessation of endeavor after further purifications. A far better way is to take the second blessing as simply a further installment, not a finality, and keep looking for many repetitions of the process, many supplementary works on and on through life. The second might very naturally, very probably, be greater and more conspicuous than those which should follow; but these latter would be just as essential to the further perfecting of the soul and to the bringing on of the time when, without "spot or wrinkle or any such thing," the bride should be presented to her Lord. It is a fatal weakness of the common theory that it has no place for these supplementary cleansings, insists that everything must always be done in a cast-iron way, by precisely two applications of the blood, and no more. We do not find that this is God's method. It is not borne out by experience, any more than by Scripture. It finds no analogy in his other operations. And it works much mischief practically, in that, the sanctification having been decreed to be absolutely complete at the second blessing, whatever comes up in heart or life after this that does not seem to be quite right is glossed over and soothingly called "mere temptation," so as to keep the theory intact. Thus, progress is prevented, and declarations

of sinlessness are made that the conduct does not indorse.

As to the confident assertion, heard on every hand, that the work of sanctification is absolutely complete at the second blessing because, forsooth, the Holy Spirit tells the people so or witnesses with them that the work is wrought, that claim may be summarily dismissed as one of the most baseless ever fabricated. Not a single text of Scripture can be legitimately quoted in proof of it. It is an assumption wholly groundless. What is commonly mistaken for this witness is a mere feeling of peace or joy, which shows, perhaps, that we are fully accepted of God and without condemnation; but it is evident that in the absence of Scripture authorization we have no right whatever to interpret this feeling as evidence that all depravity has been removed. The imparting of such information would be nothing less than a miraculous revelation wholly foreign to God's present order of proceeding. The claiming of this miraculous manifestation leads straight to fanaticism, as is constantly seen in the case of a great number who, though plainly lacking in the fruits that spring from the perfect reign of love, defy reproof by the assertion that God tells them they have perfect love in their breasts, whatever their life may appear to be. Wesley had

much trouble with such ; and almost every Methodist pastor has had. The feeling of peace or joy called the witness simply shows that a man is living up to his light ; but it says nothing as to the degree of his light or of his holiness. It is his special theological theory, a purely human thing, which bids him interpret his feelings as conclusive proof that he is free from all depravity.

The only text of Scripture that is commonly quoted as having any special bearing on this theme, or as authorizing the assertion that there is a direct witness of the Holy Ghost to the removal of all depravity, is found in 1 Cor. ii, 12, and reads thus : " But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God ; that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God." This deliverance from all depravity, it is said, is one of the things freely given to us by God ; therefore, the Holy Spirit directly imparts to us the information that at such and such a time we individually received this gift. It seems to us that such reasoning as this is far from creditable to its authors, and simply shows the desperate straits to which they are pushed. For, in the first place, they assume as true the very thing which we deny and which we declare they have not proved, namely,

that the removal of all depravity in this life is one of the gifts of God to us. In the second place, they assume, what is by no means clear, and what it seems to us the whole context of the passage is against, that the imparting of the knowledge referred to is by direct supernatural communication to each individual, instead of through the regular general channels of revelation and inspiration which we have in the apostles and the writers of the biblical books.

The text is clearly connected with verse 9, as Alford, Whedon, and commentators generally point out. Alford says, "That we may know the things freely given to us by God, that is, the treasures of wisdom and of felicity which are the free gifts of the Gospel dispensation, 'the things which God hath prepared for them that love him,' verse 9." And those things, it is declared in verse 10, God revealed unto us "through the Spirit." But how? How have the free gifts of the Gospel dispensation, so widely differing from the previous limitations of the law, been revealed to us? By Christ and his apostles and other chosen instruments. It is in this way, by studying the written word, that we chiefly know what things are freely given to us by God. And this written word nowhere says that all depravity is to be removed from human nature, and that nature

restored to its pristine purity in this life. Still less does it convey such information with reference to any individual in particular.

Hence, we call the claim that the Spirit witnesses to our entire sanctification, in the higher sense, a baseless one, that can stand no sort of close and critical examination. Drs. Pope, Whedon, Curry, and other high Methodist authorities pronounce distinctly against it as a groundless and unscriptural assumption. And even Richard Watson is totally silent upon the question, probably because he could not assent to it and did not care to directly antagonize Wesley. Dr. Whedon said: "The Spirit testifies solely to this one fact—our being children of God. This special testimony cannot be quoted for other facts than our sonship." All history shows that, when this limitation of Scripture as to the Spirit's direct revelation is once broken down, the door is open for any fanatic to claim that whatsoever facts he pleases to imagine have been directly revealed to him. Unlimited evil has resulted from this error. As already intimated, the Spirit may perhaps, in a sort of way, witness to our perfection, in the lower sense; but even this is doubtful and dangerous if it be meant that we are authorized by the Spirit to assert, positively and unreservedly, that for so many weeks and

- months and years we have not, in a single instance, deviated from duty. Even if "our heart condemn us not," it may be that this is simply because of some hardness in that heart, some blindness and carelessness that is itself a fault. "Who can discern his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults."

Since very many people whose word would be considered of weight in ordinary matters testify that they have the witness of the Spirit to their entire sanctification, it may be well at this point to inquire what value should be assigned to such testimony. In the opinion of the present writer, very little indeed, for the good and sufficient reason that they never define the terms they use in such a way that we can be sure we know precisely what they are talking about. They use the language of the class meeting and the pulpit. Their expressions are exceedingly ambiguous, being wholly of the indefinite, popular sort. Their words may mean much or little; but nobody can tell how much or how little, because there is no opportunity to cross-examine them. They generally employ Scripture phrases which may be understood very variously, and there is usually nothing in the context of their testimony to show with certainty how they understood them. Furthermore, it is the simple

truth that every man's experience, and hence his testimony, is colored and shaped by his theory. He puts his profession in the particular form that his special doctrine tells him it ought to be put in; so that two men of widely differing theologies, though of practically the same experience, will by no means phrase their feelings in the same way.

What is said, then, even by men of eminence can be easily explained without, on the one hand, calling in question either their competence or honesty, or, on the other hand, admitting the absolute correctness of the special theory in whose behalf they are quoted. Doctrines are to be settled by Scripture and reason, rather than by experience or testimony. A man may testify to his "conscious deliverance from all remaining corruption." But, in the first place, consciousness is a valid witness only to the active operations of the mind, not to its quiescent states. In the second place, what he means by "corruption"—a very vague and somewhat objectionable figure of speech—is altogether likely to be something very different from what we mean by depravity. So his testimony carries no special weight on the point in dispute. His testimony proves that he obtained a great blessing, and he is competent, also, to bear witness to various beneficent

changes in the feelings which he finds aroused within him by the impact of temptation—changes in the ease and heartiness with which he responds to calls of previously unwelcomed duty. If testimony were confined to things of this sort—plain, unmistakable things expressed in simple, untechnical language—it would do far more good than does the more or less mechanical repetition of certain shibboleths learned by rote, and neither understood by those who utter them nor by those who hear.

John Wesley's advice regarding this matter of testimony, in one part of his *Plain Account* (pp. 150, 151), is marvelously good and should be heeded: "Give no offense which can possibly be avoided; see that your practice be in all things suitable to your profession, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour. Be particularly careful in speaking of yourself. You may not, indeed, deny the work of God; but speak of it when you are called thereto, in the most inoffensive manner possible. Avoid all magnificent, pompous words. Indeed, you need give it no general name, neither perfection, sanctification, the second blessing, nor the having attained. Rather speak of the particulars which God has wrought for you." When people do this, and this only, their testimony will be golden. But when they say, "I am per-

fectly holy," "I live without sin," or, what is substantially the equivalent of these boastful sounding phrases, "I am entirely sanctified," "I am cleansed from all sin," then their testimony sends a shiver down the spines of the judicious, however much it may delight those who are chiefly anxious for the exploitation and glorification of a special hobby.

As to our need of forgiveness for things which are not sins, which are simply "involuntary deviations from rectitude," violations of the Adamic law which has been repealed and replaced as a rule of duty, although such need is taught by very high and authoritative names, we must totally repudiate it as contrary to the tenets of common sense and of true Arminian theology. There is no fault or blame for what we cannot help. And if we are not in fault there is nothing to be forgiven for. Sin is always voluntary. To talk about "involuntary sins," as many people have done, is to perpetrate an absolute contradiction. This wholly fictitious, unreal, unnatural business of imagining an atonement necessary to expiate the guilt of perfectly innocent infirmities should be summarily dismissed to the limbo whence it came. There can be no penitence where there is no guilt. We cannot be penitent for the simple existence of depravity

which we are striving against and doing our utmost to put away as rapidly as possible. We do not need to be forgiven for a misfortune which has come upon us by somebody else's act and which remains with us in spite of all that we can do. Unavoidable infirmities and ignorances need no expiation. They do need the infinite patience and love of our Heavenly Father, just as similar acts from an earthly son would need similar treatment from an earthly father. He and we together work them out until the perfect image is restored. Since God is just these things, which are entirely beyond our power to help, are in no sense imputed to us as culpable or criminal, and any attempt to make them appear so springs from a remnant of Calvinism which should be repudiated. It lands the attempter in an endless maze of contradictions.

To our mind a fatal flaw in the theory under criticism is that it makes no adequate place for the very important distinction, already briefly alluded to in the second chapter, between actions that conform to absolute rightness and mere good intentions such as secure the actor from blame. Sincerity, or meaning well, seems to be all that is covered by the usual phrases about loving God with the whole heart and having every action spring from

love, which appears to be the popular modern synonym for Christian perfection, or entire sanctification. But good intentions are certainly not enough to constitute a perfect character such as we should set before ourselves and others for a model. Professor Borden P. Bowne brings out these points, in his *Principles of Ethics*, better than any other writer with whom we are acquainted. He well says : "The will to do right in no way implies the perfection of the moral life, but only its central element and its indispensable condition. The will must be realized in fitting forms and the entire life be made an expression of right reason before that which is perfect can come" (p. 132). "Ignorance, weakness, narrowness, dullness, can never be consecrated or elevated by any amount of good intentions" (p. 68). "It is, then, by no means sufficient that one be formally right, that is, true to his convictions of duty ; he must also be materially right, that is, in harmony with reality and its laws" (p. 40). "The great need of our time in practical ethics is the serious and thoughtful application of our intellect and our knowledge to the problems of conduct. Moral progress can be made only as the good will is informed with high ideals, and is guarded by the critical reason" (p. 152). He, then, who simply does the

best he knows may be doing a great many wrong things; that is, he may fail to do the things that are called for by the circumstances in which he is put; the things which would be followed by the best consequences, measured by the good of all concerned; the things which accord with God's perfect will and which Jesus, the perfect man, would do in his place. He will not get good results from his life, any more than the blundering farmer will get good crops or the uninstructed, unpracticed mechanic will turn out a good job. He may be saved himself, "so as through fire;" but he shall suffer loss, and his work, not abiding the test, shall be burned. The child that tries to help its mother in sewing, but, through lack of skill, only makes a botch, may win a smile or a caress because the bungling attempt sprang from love; but the work will have to be picked out, the garment possibly has been spoiled, and the child for many a year will not be classed as a perfect seamstress. In the same way, a child cannot be a perfect Christian, in the higher sense of that term. Christianity has positive contents, just as farming or tailoring has. It is made up of certain virtues, which virtues were perfectly exemplified in the Founder of the religion, Jesus Christ; and a perfect Christian, in the fullest

sense, is one who perfectly exhibits these virtues.

This is the New Testament standard of perfection. To what extent can an ordinary boy or girl from thirteen to seventeen years of age exemplify this kind of perfection, or entire sanctification? They may have most thoroughly and sincerely, up to their light, consecrated themselves to God; and God, of course, has correspondingly taken possession of their hearts. But how little, after all, in the nature of the case, can they really know of the length and breadth and depth and height of his mighty law and of its practical application to the endlessly diversified and complicated circumstances of daily life! What that law demands of us, in the different relations of life in which we are to take a part, is the study of saints and sages all their days; and then there remain points on which they speak with hesitancy. What, for example, does the command "Humble yourselves" mean? What does perfect humility include? If, as Mr. Wesley says, and we think says rightly, "It is pride, not only to ascribe anything we have to ourselves, but to think we have what we really have not," if it is pride to think we have more knowledge, or virtue, or ability than we actually possess, how is it possible that these chil-

dren of fifteen should be wholly free from pride, or know, without having had more opportunity for measurement and testing in a variety of positions, just what they are? How natural and practically inevitable is it that they should think more highly of themselves at some point than they ought?

Take, as another illustration, the grace of simplicity, which touches motive. We are commanded to do all to the glory of God. Perfect obedience to that command is perfect simplicity, or perfect purity of intention. It means that we are actuated in all our doings and dealings simply by love to God and a desire for his praise; that there is only one end and aim in everything we attempt, namely, to please him; that we refer everything absolutely to his approval, and his alone. Can a child of fifteen even understand what this means? Of course not. The same might be said of perfect patience, perfect meekness, perfect gentleness, perfect contentment, perfect prayerfulness, perfect watchfulness, perfect temperance, that is, self-control or balance. These things are not for children. Why? Because they imply more knowledge and discipline and development than are possible at that age, with their slight experience of life.

And is it not equally clear that this incapac-

ity for the highest things is not a matter entirely or peculiarly of age? Some are more developed at fifteen than most are at twenty-five. Some are more mature at twenty than others at forty. Many people are always children, so far as their mental stature goes. And all people, we might say, as long as they live are so far children that their knowledge will be somewhat defective as to what is comprised in an absolute conformity to the will or nature of God. There will always be something for them to learn as to what is comprised in the reproduction of the life of Jesus—as to just what he would do if he were in their place. For this reason they cannot be perfect in the higher sense. But all the while they may be perfect in the lower sense—perfectly loyal to the duty that is shown them, not voluntarily transgressing any known will of God, hence, not sinning, in the correct acceptance of the word.

Many writers on this theme, perhaps most, freely admit that far more of consecration—because we see more to consecrate—succeeds the act of perfect faith and perfect sanctification than precedes it; which conclusively shows that they reduce entire sanctification to mere good will or right intention, something which every child of God has at conversion. And

yet these very writers repudiate most strongly, and sometimes with very intense adjectives, the idea that a person is entirely sanctified when he is converted. From all which it is easy to see, what crops out at every turn in our discussion, that no consistency or clearness on this subject can be secured until the two kinds of perfection are steadily discriminated.

One of the main defects in very many people's apprehension of this subject of Christian perfection lies in their failure to trace the close connection between love and knowledge. That "love is conditioned upon knowledge," and that "man's ability to love depends on the extent and correctness of his antecedent knowledge," as Dr. Miner Raymond has fitly said in his *Systematic Theology*, we are fully persuaded. Dr. T. C. Upham, a high proficient both in mental philosophy and spiritual experience, also declared: "Love is based in part upon knowledge, and is necessarily based upon it. It is the privilege, therefore, of the holy person to increase in holiness in exact proportion with his increase in knowledge." Certainly a man cannot love that of which he knows nothing. There must be adequate knowledge of whatever is included in love. In order to a perfect knowledge of God there must be a knowledge of God's law, including its require-

ments and provisions. There must, also, be a knowledge of self and its needs, before we are prepared to take the requisite steps for obtaining a supply for those needs. We cannot do our duty until we know what that duty is. We cannot do the right, except by accident, until we know what that right is. Will anybody claim, either for himself or another, that in this world he can always know precisely what the absolute and abstract right is—that right which lies calmly behind all the blunders and partial knowledges of the creature, as the infinite blue lies back of the floating clouds and the changing planets? It would be an infallibility greater than that to which any pope ever pretended. It would put all who differed from him, either on points of Church government or doctrine or discipline, straightway in the wrong. He could settle, not only his own duty, but everybody else's duty, off-hand. This is manifestly impossible.

There must, then, be more or less of ignorance concerning God's will, more or less of mistakes about it, in this life, at least, whatever may be the case in the other of which we know so little. Hence, our perfection can only be of that imperfect sort which is compatible with a good deal of blundering. And hence, furthermore, the wisdom of that phrase, which some

have objected to, but only we think through misconception of its meaning—"saved up to light." It has been supposed that this meant that sin, or condemnation, must remain upon the soul so long as it was ignorant of anything; which would, of course, be absurd. Sin is deviation from duty, and duty is strictly limited by knowledge attained or attainable. Therefore, we may be entirely free from condemnation all the way along, while our advancing intelligence is taking on ever new refinements of moral distinctions, and thus making us to be more fully assimilated to the divine model and procuring for us an ever closer approximation to the largest and fullest conceivable life.

And if one should say that this must be "an eternal travel toward an ever receding boundary" we do not know that we should enter any protest or feel any disappointment. For mathematicians show, in what they call an asymptote, that a curve may be drawn of such a nature that a straight line lying in the same plane may forever approach and yet never touch it. They show, also, that the sum of the vulgar fractions $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{8}$, $\frac{1}{16}$, etc., though forever approaching unity, will never reach it; as is the case, also, with the decimal series .999999 99 indefinitely extended. Thus, perhaps, it

may be with us in our approaches to the absolutely perfect purity and absolute holiness of God. If so, will it not minister to our endless joy that we are endlessly drawing nearer to him? He, alone, is the standard of the highest holiness. Our being sanctified up to our present knowledge, as we may and should be at any and every moment, all our conscious needs being met in Christ, is a delightful and glorious thing. But people must be told very plainly that this is by no means enough, and that it must not be regarded as in any sense a stopping place. They must turn their attention straightway to that unconscious selfishness, unknown depths of which both observation and experience teach are still within them, which they are gradually to come to the knowledge of and then get rid of, thus growing up into a complete likeness to Christ.

It is easy to see, from the illustrations given above, how growth in grace toward perfection must proceed and in what particular directions it will take place. On the supposition that a person is really holy, set apart for God, loving God with all his present powers, and doing the divine will so far as it has been made known to him, his progress will consist in a steadily increasing mastery of the contents of this will, with an exactly corresponding con-

formation of his conduct to this perpetually enlarging grasp of the right. It is well known that the power of moral discrimination in matters whose good or evil nature is doubtful—referred to by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, where he speaks of those who “by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil” (v, 14)—has a practically unlimited capacity of improvement. The child in intelligence and spiritual experience, whether ten years or forty years old, knows very little of the nicer distinctions and finer points in morals. The first principles or rudiments of Christianity are all that he is acquainted with. Milk, and not solid food, has been his diet. He is conceited, without knowing it. He is obstinate and willful, but calls it by an entirely different, and much more honorable, name. He is full of faults, plain to the more discerning eye of the better instructed, but he is wholly ignorant of them, perhaps even considers them virtues, and so makes no effort whatever for their removal. He is, thus, a reproach and an offense, doing much harm, though very likely deeming himself a “pattern of good works.” If his eyes become open to the true state of the case, or if he begin even to suspect his deficiencies, he will set himself to studying things and will be-

gin to grow in a way before impossible. His moral discernment will become keener and keener, and he will recognize more and more things in his past life as not being in accordance with the standard of perfect righteousness, though hitherto he has thought them right. And, as he goes on, many of the thoughts and feelings and actions which, even now, with his present increased light, seem to call for no change will begin to show their defects under the more powerful illumination to which they will be subjected.

Thus the ideal advances ever, the standard grows greater and higher all the time. To be entirely like Jesus means more to us this year than it did last if we are progressing; and it will mean more next year than it does this. And we shall see more and more clearly as we go on that, however largely we have been saved hitherto, there is a still larger salvation opening before us. For there is no stopping place in this matter, in this life, at least. As to the other, we know too little to venture an opinion. So long as we are on this earth, at any rate, we shall never reach a point where both our power of moral discernment and our intellectual development, on which it closely depends, cannot be increased. In other words, they will remain imperfect, and this intellectual

imperfection will necessitate more or less of moral imperfection—not in the sense of blameworthiness, but in the sense of coming short of the moral ideal.

We hold it to be also true that there is another particular in which there lies before us, as long as we are in the flesh, an endless opportunity for progress. We refer to the promptness and heartiness with which we accept or welcome the will of God. We are warranted, it seems to us, in thinking that an angel or a redeemed spirit above unites with the divine will more swiftly, eagerly, absolutely than does anyone here below; so that the prayer that God's will may be done in us as in heaven is one always appropriate for the ripest earthly believer, one which he does not outgrow. Must it not, also, be said that the failure to render this perfectly prompt and hearty obedience, even though our purpose is never so good, indicates some remaining disorder in our powers, shows that perfect harmony there is not yet quite restored? There is probably some slight lack of perfect watchfulness, some over-occupation with self, so that we do not recognize the will of God, coming in unexpected shapes, as quickly as we might. Hence, being for a small or large moment in doubt what is his will, there is a flaw in the

perfect promptness with which it is seized. It is impossible to believe that depravity is all gone, so long as there is possibility of improvement in the promptness and heartiness with which God's will is known and done, for this is only another way of saying that there is possibility of improvement in our empowerment for service. There would seem to be, so far at least as this life is concerned, a possibility of unlimited and perpetual growth in both these directions.

It is, we suppose, failure to separate the two things referred to a little above—blameworthiness and blemish—that has led many writers and speakers on this theme to insist that a man may be perfect in love, while very imperfect in the qualities or manifestations of love; that he may have a perfect subjective or internal purification, while his outward life is far from perfect and his Christian graces are very immature. These writers will declare that a person who unquestionably shows imperfect control of tongue or temper, imperfect patience, humility, meekness, gentleness, contentment, prayerfulness, etc., has, nevertheless, perfect love. They overlook the fact that all these virtues and qualities of a perfect character are one and all but parts of love, and parts that can in no wise be separated from the whole. We sepa-

rated them in thought, simply for convenience of consideration, precisely in the same way that we assign special names—"Arctic," "Atlantic," "Pacific," "Indian"—to the different parts of the one great ocean, the undivided body of water which covers three fourths of the globe, whose billows join in all latitudes with no sign of separation.

Even so, there is but one divine element—love. Patience is love suffering; meekness is love enduring provocation; peace is love reposing, or love producing harmony with environment; humility is love estimating its claims; truth is love speaking; joy is love exulting; charity is love sitting in judgment; politeness is love in society; and so on. Love embraces everything. This is why getting more religion is only getting more love, why there can be nothing higher than love, why, as Wesley says, "love is the one kind of holiness, existing in different degrees in various believers;" and if we are seeking anything but more love we are seeking amiss. Whatever defect there may be, then, in any of these divisions, or departments, or developments of love, is a real defect in love itself. There can be no perfection in the latter which does not show itself throughout the former.

The very vagueness of the word "love,"

taken in a merely general way, and not separated into its component parts which have a closer application to daily life, lends itself readily to delusion ; and directing the attention to one or more of the parts, such as are most practical, is an excellent way of detecting the deception. Love, being an emotion, is best tested or measured by that to which it moves us, by something which comes out clearer into the light of day as a matter of practical obedience to the will of God. It is quite convenient and comfortable for a person to say, when charged with certain derelictions, "I feel nothing but love ; but on account of my physical and mental infirmities I am not able to manifest my feelings." Is not such a person very much on a par with the child who, when questioned at school, replies, "I know, but I cannot tell?" The trouble with the child is that he does not really and clearly know. He only thinks he knows ; he has only a vague, dim, and misty half-knowledge, which, of course, refuses to shape itself into a definite form of words. The endeavor to put his cloudy conception into articulate speech is the very test needed to reveal its cloudiness, which was before suspected, but now is manifest. Just so it is with the claim that our love is all right, while our manifestation or exhibition of it somehow fails.

The latter must be accepted as the test of the former.

Love is shown by its fruits. The only way we can really know the state of the heart is to watch its outcome. If the outward is only relatively or partially perfect, the proper conclusion to draw is that the inward, also, is only relatively or partially perfect. A partially perfect life means a partially perfect love. If, for example, something that looks like pride is seen in a man's demeanor, if there is too much self-assertion and self-confidence, if there is an assumption of leadership for which there is no sufficient foundation of well-attested ability, does not this plainly show that an over-fondness for self really has place in his heart, that there is a lack of proper love to the others with whom a comparison has been made so much more to their disadvantage than it ought to have been? Would they have been thus wronged in the estimate had they been perfectly loved? In the same way, if there is impatience in a person's conduct, if irritation or petulance is shown in tone or manner, it appears that pure and perfect love is not in active exercise at that time. If it were it would sweep away these uncomfortable agitations; it would prevent the formation of such feelings; it would make impossible, even for a second, anything like

animosity toward the person or thing that, by interfering with our plans or crossing our will or frustrating our purposes, has disturbed the equanimity of our mind. And so we might proceed with the other qualities. When closely analyzed we believe that any experience or manifestation of such traits as we have mentioned will be found to imply some lack of love, that is, of love in active exercise then and there. But it is only as it is in activity, when the conditions calling for it exist, that we can rightly infer its probable existence.

Clearly, then, it would be better to say—not, “I have perfect love of the highest quality which, through my mental and physical imperfections, I am unable to manifest”—but, “Because of my mental and physical imperfections, my love must also be in some respects imperfect, and be called perfect love only in that lower, inferior sense which suffices to keep me from condemnation, because keeping me from sin.” To claim anything else is to fall into the same pit of absurdity which involves those believers in the healing of sickness by faith alone who stoutly maintain that the cure of their bodily ailments is complete, while the symptoms all remain unchanged. “Simply ignore them, and press forward, claiming the reality at the back of, and below, the symp-

toms," is the cry of the faith healers ; " count them only so many infirmities, and steadily believe that the life of Jesus is there just the same, working out the great restoration." Sensible people count this, in the case of the faith doctors, as absurd fanaticism and barefaced presumption, the all-sufficient cause of so many pseudo-cures which result in physical relapse and spiritual despair. We find a complete parallel in the case of great numbers who profess, just as loudly and positively, to be wholly cured of all those sinful habits of the soul which constitute about what we mean by depravity, although the symptoms of that moral malady, as shown in the tongue and temper of daily life, appear to be but little changed. In the matter of both spiritual and physical healing it is the height of unreason to claim for the interior anything which does not, with a fair degree of promptness, show itself on the exterior. This is a looking, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen, which was not contemplated in the apostle's exhortation.

John Fletcher certainly did much to guard against such a perversion of the term " perfection ;" for, at the very beginning of his treatise (*Last Check to Antinomianism*, §I), where he formally defines what he is about to discuss,

he calls it "a spiritual constellation made up of these gracious stars—perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity for our visible enemies, as well as for our earthly relations, and, above all, perfect love for our invisible God." And he adds, "This last star is always accompanied by all the others, as Jupiter is by his satellites." So it would seem, from this, at least, that he did not think a person might be perfect in love while not in the qualities of love. Neither, apparently, did John Wesley; for he speaks (*Plain Account*, pp. 129–132) of some whom he has met that "are undeniably wanting in long-suffering, Christian resignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatever occurs and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in everything give thanks and rejoice evermore. They are not happy, at least, not always happy, for sometimes they complain. They say, 'This or that is hard.' Some are wanting in gentleness. . . . If they are reproved or contradicted, though mildly, they do not take it well. . . . They speak sharply or roughly when they reprove others. Some are wanting in goodness. They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their look and air, in

the whole tenor of their behavior. . . . Some are wanting in fidelity, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity. . . . Some are wanting in meekness, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. . . . Their soul is out of tune and cannot make the true harmony. Some are wanting in temperance. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food which they know, or might know, would most conduce to the health, strength, and vigor of the body." He says to all such, "You have not what I call Christian perfection ; if others will call it so they may." Hence, he certainly would not have admitted that they could have perfect love without the perfection of the accompanying traits and practical developments thereof.

No, it will by no means do to say that the defects of the life are simply due to lack of skill in manipulating the outward implements by which the inward disposition finds expression, that the trouble is due simply to the old habits not being fully mastered by the new spirit within. A young convert might say this, for it is only another way of saying that depravity to some extent still remains ; but he cannot say it who asserts that all depravity is gone. The inward disposition and the outward manifestation are linked too closely together

to be separated. No such division of our powers can rationally be made. We are a unit. The spiritual, the intellectual, and the physical are so very closely intermingled while we remain in the flesh that each of them more or less controls the others. The spiritual and moral development is dependent upon the intellectual at many points, as has been already noted in this discussion. And it is none the less true that the intellectual condition is, in turn, most closely dependent upon the physical. The mind and body, under their present conditions of union, are inseparably interpenetrative. Whole volumes, full of fascinating interest, are devoted to the details, which cannot be given here. Every disease has certain specific mental effects, readily traceable, as all doctors know. This is most clearly seen in such marked diseases as dyspepsia, which produces depression, and consumption, which produces hopefulness. But other diseases also affect us in less traceable ways. And no one is perfectly free from all disease or in a state of absolutely perfect health. All abnormal physical states, however slight, are accompanied by more or less abnormal mental states, up to pronounced insanity or the total overthrow of reason, which is but the result of violated laws of health.

To make a single quotation out of the multitude that might be given in support of this position, we take the following from Bishop Brooks's posthumous volume of sermons. In a discourse on "The Natural and the Spiritual" he says: "Need I even suggest to you how every man has in his bodily constitution the physical basis of the most subtle and transcendent parts of his profoundest life? Out from the very marrow of his bones comes something which his finest affections never outgo, and which gives a color to his soul's loftiest visions. His dreams are different from other men's because of the texture of his muscles and the color of his blood. It is on the harp of his nervous system that the psalm of his life is played. There is a physical correspondence to everything that he thinks or fancies. There is a physical basis to his most spiritual life. . . . A man thinks well and loves well and prays well because of the red running of his blood." In the words of Paul, "That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and then that which is spiritual."

An imperfection, then, in any one of these three so intimately related sides or aspects of the man means an imperfection of the whole. The more nearly normal is any one of them, other things being equal, the more nearly nor-

mal will be the remaining two. The spiritual cannot be so separated from its necessary dependence on the other two parts that it can be perfected while they are imperfect. Although three, we are one and one in three—a unit. The entity or being which goes by our name will be judged by the total outcome of all its powers and faculties. To change our old habits is our life task. The degree of alteration shown in them at any moment measures the degree of our growth in grace and our approximation to the stature of Christ. Just so far as perfect love does not show itself, we may be sure it does not exist, but that something else exists which would fain pass itself off for the genuine article. To claim that perfect love fills the heart, however little of it appears in the life and in the practical manifestation of these various virtues, is a monstrous delusion, fraught with great harm and closely akin to that Antinomianism which claims that its standing in Christ is all right whatever may be its conduct.

Our growth in holiness, that is, the decrease of depravity or sinfulness, is most fitly measured, among other things, by our increasing power over temptation. This is a topic most intimately connected with perfection, and a topic which many of the principal writers on

the latter theme have manifestly failed to master, thereby bringing themselves and their readers into great confusion. The main muddle is over the words "repression" and "extermination." Scarce any two authors are agreed as to just what is repressed or regulated, and what is destroyed or exterminated. It is quite common, with a very large number of those who assume to teach the public on this theme, to declare that temptations, with the wholly sanctified, "do not go beyond the thoughts;" "that they are stopped in the intellectual perception;" that they are wholly from without, finding "no response from within;" that, as soon as presented, they awaken "at once a universal rebellion throughout the whole soul, instead of the emotions becoming favorably excited;" in short, that everything has been eradicated from the soul which would do anything but greet with loathing the object of temptation. It ought not to require much acumen to perceive that, if this be the case, any real temptation, and, of course, any falling into sin, is rendered absolutely impossible. Even a limited knowledge of mental philosophy suffices to show that that which in no way touches the sensibilities, except to arouse their antagonism, could not by any possibility produce favorable action of the will, which is reached

only through the sensibilities ; and it would be the barest kind of a fraud to style that sort of thing a temptation.

A bottle of whisky, for example, is no temptation to a man in whose whole nature it arouses only disgust, although its very presence is the fiercest kind of temptation to one who has come into bondage to the appetite for liquor. If there was nothing in Adam's nature that responded with any favor to the assault of Satan it is impossible to see how he fell. If there was nothing in Christ's nature that so responded it is impossible to ascribe to him any credit or virtue for resisting, and it is impossible to regard him as "in all points tempted like as we are," or to believe that he "suffered being tempted." The good people, to whose glaring mistake we make reference, have supposed that it was in some way derogatory to the Saviour's purity to imagine him as really feeling the force of temptation or doing anything but look upon it with a coldly critical and purely intellectual contemplation, as upon something that did not in the least interest or concern him. He could hardly, on this theory, even have spurned it, as he would a noxious reptile, or have brushed it away, as he would a venomous insect ; for this would imply that it had power to do him

harm and that he might have yielded. It is entirely safe to say that, if Christ was a complete man and in any sense an example to us, he deeply, keenly felt the temptation to shrink from the bitter agonies of the cross. A multitude of scriptures bear witness to the sore trouble and bitter anguish with which he wrestled against that which found his flesh weak, simply because it was real flesh, not a pretense, though his spirit was perfectly willing.

And it is, also, safe to say that no soul, however completely sanctified, has any of the natural, normal susceptibilities and propensities of human nature eradicated. Depravity being not a creation of something new, annihilation is not called for. No new powers being added, there is no demand for subtraction. If new physical or intellectual capacities, new constitutional faculties, had been imparted at the fall, then something of this sort would have to be taken away to constitute recovery. But, since depravity in no way implies a substance or entity projected into the soul, but was only a perversion or derangement of existing powers, its very completest destruction must be simply a regulation of those powers. None of our essential human parts, among which are certainly emotions and desires, are

taken away by grace. It is just as legitimate and inevitable for an emotional nature to be stirred when the objects divinely appointed to stir it are presented, as for an intellectual nature. It is no more sin in a hungry man to desire food than to perceive that the food before him is adapted to satisfy his hunger. He cannot help desiring it to some extent, for the desire is instinctive and necessary and, hence, innocent. But, if law forbids him to take that food, plainly it is his business, in the exercise of his will, to turn his thoughts as far as possible away from the exciting object and refrain from cherishing the desire. In that case, there will be no sin. Sin begins when the desire is fostered against the remonstrance of the conscience, and so passes over from the mere incipient, instinctive desire into a full-fledged, voluntary desire, which is a very different thing.

But desires of some sort for those things which seem calculated to gratify the natural propensities, those things that are pleasant and agreeable, a man must have so long as he continues to be a man. That which produces pain within him—inevitably produces it because of the constitution of his nature—can never be regarded in the same light or awaken precisely the same feelings as that which pro-

duces enjoyment. Self-love, that innocent and necessary propensity which prompts us to seek the pleasant rather than the painful, is a component part of our being, from which, so long as we remain human, we shall never be divorced. After the sinful self, or selfishness, is all gone there will remain this innocent self, giving cause for self-denial, that is, pain in the path of duty. Desire in its tentative, provisional stage is purely involuntary and has no more moral character than breathing, for the very good reason that it can be as little helped and has as little to do with the will.

But, unless an object is both to some degree desired and at the same time perceived to be forbidden, its presence cannot constitute temptation. A man who is simply disgusted with the sight and smell of tobacco, all his senses and tastes revolting against it, is not tempted by being asked to smoke. Nor is he tempted by such an invitation who, while liking the weed, considers it perfectly allowable to use it. "Temptation" is only another word for the excitement produced in the mind, or the conflict arising, in presence of an object liked but unlawful, instinctively desired but authoritatively forbidden. We believe it cannot be better defined.

But temptation, which is never sin of itself,

though often confounded with it by untrained minds, sometimes to their great injury, passes into sin just where the desire passes from its incipient, involuntary stage to the completed and voluntary, just when the desire for the object or course of action seen to be contrary to God's will begins to be cherished, even though but slightly, or is retained, instead of being thrust vigorously away; just when a man, feeling within him a drawing toward a certain object and perceiving, also, that it is not right under the circumstances to possess or pursue the object, does, nevertheless, yield a little to the drawing or neglect to oppose and repel it, just then he begins to sin. To use the language of St. James (i, 14, 15): "Each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust [or desire], and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived [or come to full fruition by obtaining the consent of the will, the deciding factor], beareth sin." Is not this clear?

The difference between partial and entire sanctification, at this point, in the light of these facts, may be stated thus: He who is but partially sanctified has a great deal more of trouble with his lower nature than he ought to have, than it was designed originally that he should have, more than Adam had. His ap-

petites and passions, by long indulgence on his own part, together with their inherited abnormality, have gained inordinate strength, so that they make it very difficult, more or less as the case may be, for the higher powers, the reason and conscience, to keep them in their proper place. As he grows in holiness, as his sanctification increases and draws nearer to the point of perfection, while the original elements of his nature are not added to or diminished, any more than they were at the fall, the distortion, or bent, or bias, or tendency toward evil which has come upon them is gradually straightened out and rectified. The abnormality is removed or destroyed, but certainly not the powers themselves. They are simply subjugated completely, or put in perfect order.

There can be no such destruction of the sensibilities or susceptibilities as that all stirrings of the emotions or desires can be gratified and no occasion remain for self-denial. The innocent sensibilities will always need to be guarded against excessive or misdirected action, will need to be held in check lest they go beyond proper bounds. Their tendency to seek gratification—which is by no means the same as a tendency to sin, recognized as such, which it is our business to diminish day by day and as

speedily as possible destroy—did not come from the first Adam and will not be destroyed by the second Adam. The latter, the tendency to sin, is controlled in partial sanctification and destroyed in entire sanctification. The former, the tendency to seek gratification, will always remain and will always need looking after. Hence, the constant need for watchfulness and prayer that we fall not into, or yield to, temptation, which will always be a source of danger through the feelings which it arouses.

Unless the force of the temptation is felt by the sensibilities, and not simply perceived by the intellect, there can be no temptation. When the abnormality, or undue strength, of our appetites and passions is entirely removed, then alone is established their due and proper subservience to the reason and conscience, then alone comes the easy and prompt subjection of the lower to the higher. They will always seek blindly for gratification when objects suited to gratify them are presented, for exactly that is their function in our complicated structure; and they will always need to be resisted and repressed in cases where their gratification would not be right. The most absolutely complete sanctification conceivable would not alter this. It was Adam's business to do this, and because he did not he fell. Christ was obliged

to do this, and because he did it perfectly he was not touched by sin. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master." In proportion as we approach the condition where our passions and appetites have simply their healthy, normal degree of urgency, such as is essential to constitute us complete human beings and no more, where the effects of the fall upon them and the effects of our previous improper yielding have all been neutralized, in that proportion we approach entire sanctification, in the fullest sense, or the removal of all depravity.

The degree of ease and readiness, then, with which we overcome temptation and avoid sin is an accurate test of our progress, our growth in grace. Early in the Christian life, or where there is but a small measure of sanctification, there are often sore struggles and severe conflicts, the lower powers through previous indulgence being in great force and not yet accustomed to the yoke. With more mature Christians these conflicts have greatly diminished, holy habits have become established, and passions are much less violent, having become largely subjugated and made to know their place. The ripest saints have learned the secret of God's presence; are so recollected that they very rarely miss any indication of

God's will, however slight; are so quick to recognize, by their vigilant and trained moral sense, the right or wrong of every incitement or suggestion that they are very seldom, even for a moment, misled; and have so deep an abhorrence of sin or anything approaching it that no sooner is it recognized than the whole force of their being, with resolute promptitude, fiercely thrusts it away. Very great degrees of advancement may be made and a very close approximation reached to the ideal condition; but it does not appear possible on earth to gain a place where there can be no increase in the promptness with which we recognize God's will and the heartiness with which we embrace it. In other words, the powers by which we perceive the evil and repulse it remain at our best estate somewhat imperfect, and our obedience will not be flawless. Our sanctification will not be absolutely complete. Our depravity may be very greatly diminished, how greatly none can tell; but, so far as we can perceive, it is never, in this life, absolutely destroyed.

How, indeed, can one tell with exactness just what is the precise measure of strength which his various passions and propensities ought really to have, or just how urgent they would have been had not sin in any way touched them? And without this knowledge

it is evidently impossible for him to tell whether or not he is entirely free from depravity. That the Holy Spirit by special personal revelation imparts this very peculiar piece of information to his mind, as some seem to claim, is to the present writer inconceivable and absurd, totally contrary to all our knowledge of the Spirit's operations. And, in default of this, we know of no method by which such information can be acquired. Furthermore, how can one tell with positiveness, in the absence of a direct and immediate revelation from God, whether, for so many days or weeks, the unavoidable incipient desires for pleasant, but forbidden, things have not in some instances, to some slight, but perceptible, extent, passed beyond the necessary stage and been for an instant cherished, or suffered to linger unrebuked, in the mind? If they have there has been more or less of sin. How can one be sure whether the suggestions of Satan have been repelled with the utmost possible instantaneousness and vehemence, or whether, owing to some still remaining, slightly morbid state of the sensibilities, there has been a dalliance with them that was not necessary and, hence, was blameworthy? How very few at all realize what they mean when they say that, since such and such a date, they have been saved from all sin!

It is amusing to see how, almost invariably, these very ones who make this declaration, when charged with professing sinless perfection, indignantly repudiate any such position, apparently not discerning that he who is now without sin or has been delivered from all sin is by the very nature of the case necessarily sinless—for that, and that only, is the meaning of the word—sinless, not, of course, from birth, like Jesus, but sinless for the length of time which their “second” experience covers. We think it is better not to pass judgment upon ourselves in this very intricate matter, about which some uncertainty would seem to be inevitable. It is better simply to press on with as much haste as possible, making it the one absorbing object of our lives to know and do God’s will, leaving to him the decision as to whether or not we have in any degree fallen short of our highest possibility of growth, and certain that the broad shield of his forgiving love will cover our shortcomings as we humbly say, night by night, in view of what his pure eye may have seen amiss in us during the day, “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.”

Before leaving this subject, it may be remarked that we have in it an excellent example of the great necessity for care in the use

of words. Those who have declaimed with such violence against what has been called, or stigmatized as, the repressive theory of entire sanctification, and have denounced in unmeasured terms its upholders, as though they were guilty of some rank heresy, have been the victims of misconception and have been fighting a man of straw. For to repress means, according to a standard authority, "to press back or down effectually; to crush down or out; to quell; to subdue; to suppress; as, to *repress* sedition or rebellion; to *repress* the first risings of discontent. Hence, to check; to restrain; to keep back." To repress depravity, then, which, as we have already shown, is simply a rebellion, is a most proper term, and means to crush it or destroy it and restore the perfect harmony which originally prevailed. When that is restored the fullest kind of entire sanctification will have been reached. It is the improper regarding of depravity as something to be uprooted from the mind or soul which has made the use of the term "repression" an offense. It is declared by one of these disputants, who has written a volume of nearly five hundred pages—good at some points, but misty in more, for lack of apprehending the force of words—that "every unconverted man has power to repress disordered affections, and

that grace destroys disordered affections." The fact is that the disorder is destroyed, by being repressed, when sufficient grace is obtained or sufficient growth reached, but that the affections are so far from being destroyed that they remain intact. Another one of this class declares, "Temptations to sin are from without ; they are not impulsions of the mind." The fact is that the exciting cause or occasion of the temptation is some external object or person, but that the temptation itself is within the man invariably, no matter how pure he is, since it is a mental excitement.

On the other hand, they who deny that there is any such thing as partial sanctification fail to distinguish between the sensibilities in their natural, and in their unnatural, strength. Both the partly, and the entirely, sanctified man will have to check the cravings of desire whenever these cravings are met by the inhibitions of duty, and a conflict will of necessity take place. But these writers ignore the fact that, with the former, the checking is much harder, because the disordered condition of the faculties yet in some measure remains, thus making it easier to yield to temptation than it was with Adam or than it is with those who have the disorder more thoroughly rectified. So, on all sides, these discussions have largely

degenerated into mere logomachies, which would be, for the most part, obviated if a few fundamental definitions were made and adhered to and a few clear distinctions in the use of terms properly regarded.

One of the most singular notions connected with this subject of growth, which one meets at every turn in a certain class of "holiness" authors, represented most prominently by the Revs. J. A. Wood, G. D. Watson, and William McDonald, is that, no matter how much we grow in grace, we are brought by it no whit the nearer to entire sanctification and become in no degree or particular purer in heart. Amazing as it may seem to those not familiar with this class of writings, this is declared in so many words and with every appearance of complete belief. Dr. Watson says (*White Robes*, pp. 29, 42, 78, 79): "The growth that is previous to heart purity [by which he always means perfect purity] does not, in any degree, cleanse the soul from inbred sin." "To be freed from all sin does not indicate growth or maturity, but is the pure normal condition of a soul, whether it be old or young. Processes of growth can no more produce heart purity than addition can produce subtraction." "Purity is the subtraction of evil, but growth is the addition of grace. Any child can see that

these are just opposite to each other." "Purification and progress are as distinct in their offices as sin and grace are distinct in their character." Mr. Wood similarly says, in his *Purity and Maturity* (pp. 183, 148): "It has been asked, 'Is not growth in grace growth toward entire holiness?' If it be meant, 'Is growth in grace, in the common acceptance of the term, the process of gradually cleansing the soul?' we answer, 'No.' " "The fact that inbred sin is a unit . . . is proof that we cannot obtain freedom from it by growth in grace. Like error, inbred sin is a simple, uncompounded element or quality. . . . Hence, it cannot be divided or subdivided and removed by parts." Mr. McDonald says (*Scripture Views of Holiness*, pp. 212, 213): "Depravity can never be removed by growth in grace." "Growth is but the accumulation of the same kind of particles of which the animal or plant was possessed at its beginning. Growth never changes a tree or animal into one of another kind. . . . The growth of a believer does not consist in what is removed, but in what is added. Holiness is the gift of God."

Other passages, too long to be quoted here, show that these writers—who seem to have quite a large following, in spite of the preposterous nature of their positions—have an

idea that, if growth be conceded to have anything to do with removing or diminishing depravity, some dishonor is cast upon the spirit of truth, the blood of Christ, and the office of faith. But surely no one of any evangelical school of thought for a moment supposes or claims that growth in grace is secured in any other way than by faith—joined, of course, with works—and through the perpetually operating efficacy of the atonement and through the ever present Holy Spirit. These divine agencies are behind and within every genuine particle of growth. It need not be affirmed so fiercely that “there is no power in growth.” Everyone admits that “all power is of God.” But we hold it to be quite as conceivable, and far more in accordance with divine operations elsewhere, that successive operations of the Holy Spirit remove depravity—it being, in no comprehensible sense, a unit incapable of division and removal in parts—as that it is removed altogether or not at all. The class of writers under discussion are obliged by their theory (than which anything more untenable or remote from reason can scarcely be imagined) to assert that depravity is in no degree diminished, even at the new birth. Their language is: “When original sin goes it all goes; while it stays it all stays. Its removal is always in-

stantaneous ; in the nature of things it cannot be otherwise." If an appeal is made to the nature of things, or, in other words, to common sense and pure reason, we are quite willing to carry the case before that tribunal, confident that the verdict will be on our side.

We say that in the nature of things the negative and positive works go on simultaneously in the soul. The destructive and reconstructive processes proceed side by side. Just so far as one dies unto sin he lives unto God. Just so far as one puts off the old man he puts on the new man. More light always implies less darkness, more knowledge less ignorance, more wisdom less folly, more strength less weakness, more beauty less ugliness, more love less selfishness. In the same way, more of the grace or favor of God implies less in us which is contrary to God's nature—that is, less depravity. There can be no vacuum in the soul. As we are emptied of evil we are filled with righteousness. As self goes out Christ comes in. There can be no instant when we or any of our powers are simply neutral, neither in favor nor disfavor with God. We must be at all times either one thing or another, and at no two moments are we in precisely the same state. The decrease of depravity, or sinfulness, and the increase of

holiness keep always equal pace. They are not really two things, but one and the same thing looked at from different sides, like the decrease of darkness and the increase of light, the decrease of cold and the increase of heat. "In the nature of things it cannot be otherwise." To talk about one being always instantaneous and the other always gradual, one being both begun and completed at the second blessing, while the other is conterminous with the Christian life, whether in this world or the world to come, is to use words without significance, is the same as to say that cold diminishes while heat is in no way increased.

Most people require no argument to show them that it is utterly impossible for a person to grow in grace, that is, in the favor of God, except as he becomes daily more Christlike, that is to say, more holy and pure, stronger in faith and in all the virtues or qualities that make up the perfect Christian. It was in this way that Wesley expressed himself in the passage already referred to from his sermon "On Patience" (*Sermons*, vol. ii, p. 222), "In the same proportion as he grows in faith he grows in holiness, he increases in love, lowliness, meekness, in every part of the image of God." Similarly, Bishop Foster in his *Christian Purity*, expressing his dissent from those

"who deride the doctrine of progress in holiness, or progressive sanctification" (p. 188), says: "We have no favor for the sentiment that growth in grace is not growth toward entire holiness" (p. 185). "That growth in holiness, from the degree of it imparted in regeneration, is progress toward the completeness of it in entire sanctification, we cannot conceive a Christian understandingly to deny" (p. 183). Bishop Merrill, also, adds his disclaimer of those who are so void of understanding as to deny this self-evident truth. He says (*Aspects of Christian Experience*, pp. 263, 219, 221): "There is no growth in grace without an increase in holiness." "Every step of advancement in the divine life brings more purity and lifts the soul nearer to the sublime height of complete holiness. The growing Christian is increasing in holiness." "His growth toward maturity is the highest proof of increasing purity."

It is, of course, true that a mere enlargement or increase of capacity, a further "accumulation of the same kind of particles," would not mean greater purity; a simple increase of quantity would not affect quality. But we are not speaking of any such increase as that when we speak of Christian growth, or growth in grace. We are speaking of spiritual growth,

not of any mere physical or mental growth. The distinction is a very simple one, and it seems singular that so many good people should have entirely overlooked it. The mere enlargement of a man's powers or capacities would not enlarge his holiness, making him a better man; nor would the decrease or decay of his powers decrease his depravity and so make him in this way a better man. A man is made better—be his powers large or small, increasing, decreasing, or stationary—when the proportion of those powers which are dedicated to God increases.

If the sum of his powers is ten, and, though a Christian, he is in a low state of grace, his holiness may be represented by six and his depravity by four. If his powers remain the same and he grows steadily in grace the ratio of his holiness to his depravity will constantly shift, becoming as seven to three, as eight to two, as nine to one, and so on. If his powers should be doubled, so as to be represented by twenty, and he remain in the same state of grace as at first, so that twelve to eight correctly represents his ratio of goodness, it is plain that, while in one sense he might be said to have more holiness, in the correct sense he has not, since his depravity, also, has proportionately increased and the net result to his

character is the same. The test of his true growth in grace is the growth of the disproportion between his holiness and his depravity, so that the former more and more preponderates in the scale. A person becomes perfectly good when perfectly freed from all depravity, so that ten to zero represents him. When perfectly good he cannot be better, though he can get larger; so that fifteen or twenty or forty to zero would be his expression. As a matter of fact, however, according to the doctrine explained in these pages, depravity will never come in this life to an absolute zero, but will always be represented by, at least, some fraction of one, though it may be and should be a constantly diminishing fraction. Our powers will also, in all ordinary cases, be increasing, so that if at conversion in youth ten represents them and we are not taken to heaven till, after a long and useful life, we have reached threescore and ten, our proper figure may, perhaps, then be one hundred, of which glorious sum total only a unit or a fraction thereof would stand for the depravity remaining.

The claim so often made, that all growth in grace—some who are more timid or temperate content themselves with saying *nearly* all—comes after, and not before, entire sanctification, is now seen, we trust, to come from total

misconception of the signification of the term. The truth is that such growth must come before, and not after. When one is entirely freed from depravity or sinfulness or evil there can be no more growth in holiness or goodness. The only further growth possible is growth in quantity, not quality—the expansion of power which has no moral or ethical flavor. A boot-black may be as holy as a prime-minister, a canal boat boy as holy as a president. Indeed, when the former has become the latter he is very likely to be less pure. This enlargement of capacity, we may suppose, will go on forever and ever, so that we shall be perpetually fitted for larger tasks and higher posts in the administrative service of the higher regions; while all the time our entire powers, without the slightest fraction of diminution, are absorbingly devoted to God, and so our holiness is kept at the maximum point. Then, and then only in the fullest sense, shall we be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect.

CHAPTER VI.

Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

THIS phrase, "baptism with the Holy Ghost"—especially in its less accurate form, "the baptism of the Holy Ghost"—is of very frequent occurrence in the devotional writings and religious meetings of our time. And this is the more noteworthy, considering how few seem to have clear ideas concerning it and, also, how slight is the use made of it in Scripture. It is used only once by Jesus, and only once by any of the apostles, both times in the Acts; and it is not found at all in the epistles. It would seem to have been a favorite expression with John the Baptist, for each of the evangelists records his use of it. And it is not difficult to see why the Baptist, who doubtless originated it, should have been particularly fond of it. Baptism was the great feature of his work. He was constantly baptizing with water upon profession of repentance and faith in the coming Messiah. Hence he naturally expresses the superiority of this Messiah by saying that the prominent feature of his work, the sign which

should be connected with the establishment of his kingdom, in other words, his baptism, would be with the Holy Ghost, and that the people should receive from him, not simply water, but the Spirit, the substance of which the water was but the type and shadow.

This figure, then, emphasizes and perpetuates the contrast between the two dispensations; and we accordingly find it especially current just at the transition period, when the new dispensation, that of the Holy Ghost, was being inaugurated and the prophecy of the Baptist was necessarily fresh in all minds. But as time wore on and John's work somewhat faded the apostles no longer spoke of the giving of the Spirit as a baptism, but came to use other forms of expression which seemed to them preferable. It was called the "anointing," the "sealing," the "earnest," the "indwelling." All these terms, it is very evident, have reference to substantially the same thing as is denoted by the "baptism." And Luke, in the Acts, employs still other equivalent phrases. He speaks of being "filled with the Holy Ghost," of "receiving the Holy Ghost," of having "the gift of the Holy Ghost," of having the Holy Ghost "fall on," or be "poured out on," or "descend on," or "come upon" the people. These terms all refer to precisely the

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same incident, which is also called being "baptized with the Holy Ghost." Hence, they must be equivalent expressions, used simply to give variety to the writing. It is manifestly one and the same thing which is meant, whichever of these dozen or more words is uttered.

Precisely what is the thing meant? What is it to be baptized, anointed, sealed, filled, indwelt by or with the Holy Ghost? Is it something possessed by all who truly believe on Jesus Christ and are saved by him under the present dispensation, or is it something possessed solely by those few who have attained to Christian perfection?

That this latter idea is somewhat widely held all who are familiar with the current literature of the theme must be aware. We could give extended quotations showing it from a variety of authors, some of them deservedly in high reputation. But it is hardly necessary, especially as these very same authors in other passages appear to teach that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is a special induement with power subsequent to, and distinct from, entire sanctification. Indeed, the same confusion that rules in regard to nearly all the nomenclature of this general subject finds abundant illustration in the varied treatment of this particular term. We cannot think it necessary in this, any more

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than in any of the other branches of the theme. Nor can we at all agree with the greatly respected and beloved brethren who maintain, in all honesty and fullness of conviction, that the various expressions, "anointing," "earnest," "indwelling," "sealing," "baptizing," and so on, with the Holy Ghost, as they occur in the Acts and epistles, simply refer to the "second blessing." We do not believe that view has any sanction from the Scriptures. It is difficult for us to see how any one who candidly examines this class of terms can resist the conclusion that they are manifestly used to express the state of all true believers, the state of the Church in general or of the great body of the disciples, and, hence, could not be meant simply for that small part of them who had gone on to perfection and had become of full age.

Let us look at the term "anoint." It occurs just four times: "Now he that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God" (2 Cor. i, 21); "Ye have an anointing from the holy one" (1 John ii, 20); "As for you, the anointing which ye received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you; but as his anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, ye abide in him" (1 John ii,

27). When Paul and John declared to their fellow-disciples that God had anointed them, that they had received the anointing, and that it abided in them, it seems sufficiently plain that the statements could not refer simply to a select few. There is nothing whatever in the context to indicate that they regarded it as true of only a part of the Church, instead of the whole. The clear teaching is that all true believers were priests and kings and, as such, were anointed of God. To say that only the perfect are anointed is to say that only such are priests and kings, which is not the doctrine of the Scriptures or of the Church.

Turning to the term "sealed," we find the same state of things. It occurs, in this connection, just three times: 1. "Who also sealed us"—all of us, Corinthians and apostles (2 Cor. i, 22). 2. "In whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. i, 13). This seems very explicit: Ye Ephesians, all of you who believed in Christ, were, as a natural consequence, as a necessary result or accompaniment of that believing, also sealed with the Spirit. Certainly there is no trace of particularism here. 3. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv, 30). Here the connection shows conclusively that

Paul is writing to the mass of common believers, for it occurs in the midst of exhortations that are applicable only to such. They were not mature or advanced disciples, but had recently been plucked out of heathenism, and had still to struggle hard against very common temptations into which they too often fell; but still they had been all sealed by the Spirit, his mark had been put upon them, they had been stamped as his property that he proposed to claim at the last day. Are none sealed as his except the perfect?

The term "earnest" also occurs as a noun just three times: "Who also . . . gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. i, 22); "The Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance" (Eph. i, 13, 14); "God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit" (2 Cor. v, 5)." "Unto us," in the last passage, must mean "unto all of us believers," for that is the unmistakable meaning of the pronoun throughout this chapter. And the verse appears clearly to signify that God gave to all of us when we were born again an earnest, that is, a portion, a pledge, an installment of the Spirit, as a taste of what was to come and an assurance that very much more should come. There is not the smallest hint of the earnest being confined to a few; there

is everything to indicate that it pertains to all the children of God.

If we examine the other terms referred to we find as little trace of any restriction in their application as in those already mentioned. Paul speaks eight times of the Spirit's dwelling or abiding in us. Rom. viii, 8, 9 is a good specimen: "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." Here a broad distinction is drawn between the Church and the world, the children of God and the unregenerate, with the clear declaration that in the latter, that is, all the latter, the Spirit of God dwells. So in 1 Cor. iii, 16: "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Although he says in the same chapter, that he could not speak unto them as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ, that is, partly carnal, yet he does not hesitate to call them temples of God, in whom the Spirit of God dwells. Rom. viii, 11; 1 Cor. iii, 16; vi, 19; Eph. ii, 19-22; 2 Tim. i, 14, are the other passages, and they all confirm the thought of the two above quoted. So also do the texts, only a few in number, where Paul speaks of our "receiving the Spirit." He makes the statement of all Christian disciples,

as may be seen by reference to Rom. viii, 15, "For ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;" and 1 Cor. ii, 12, "We received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God."

Why need further quotations be made? Are not these enough to convince unbiased minds? Is it conceivable that Paul and John could have used these terms as they did if they had considered them as expressing the state of Christian perfection, or entire sanctification? They never speak of the whole Church, or of the believers in general to whom they wrote, as having been entirely sanctified or brought to perfection. They exhort them to go on to perfection and to be perfect in holiness; they pray that they may be sanctified wholly or perfected; but it is always something to be accomplished in the future, never a work accomplished in the past. Paul could not possibly declare to the Corinthian Church or to the Ephesian Church that they had been wholly sanctified or made perfect in love, while on the very same page he was reproving them for their many violations of the spirit of love and exhorting them to put away a variety of most evil things. Yet he does say to them most distinctly, "Ye were sealed with the Holy

Spirit ;" "Ye received the spirit of adoption." "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you." It would seem that words could not more clearly indicate that in the opinion of Paul all who had become the children of God, by receiving Jesus Christ and believing on him, were anointed and sealed by the Spirit and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, who, indeed, took up his dwelling in them. In full harmony with this most natural interpretation we find it well remarked in McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopædia*, vol. ix. p. 947, "Under the Christian dispensation it appears to be the office of the Holy Ghost to enter into and dwell within every believer." All spiritual life is the product of the Holy Spirit. He who has only a little spiritual life has that little as directly from the Holy Spirit as does he who has a great deal ; and he has received the Holy Ghost, in receiving Jesus Christ or receiving the pardon of his sins and the witness to his adoption, as really and truly as he ever can receive him, though he has not come as thoroughly under his influence and is not as quickly responsive to his voice as he will be at subsequent periods if he goes forward.

The passages most commonly relied upon by certain authors to prove the positions which we deem erroneous are found in the Acts of

the Apostles. Their interpretation is, perhaps, somewhat more open to question than that of those thus far reviewed ; but, approaching them from the vantage ground of the clearer light of the epistles, we shall not have much difficulty in seeing what they must mean.

In the nineteenth chapter of the Acts there is an incident related concerning some converts at Ephesus of which the authors above alluded to make very extensive use, referring to it repeatedly as furnishing conclusive proof that after conversion a second work, called "receiving the Holy Ghost," is essential to the full equipment of the believer. The special verse on which they build this doctrine, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" would seem to give some sanction to it were it not for the fact that it is a very manifest mistranslation. It has been long known as such to scholars, has been corrected by all the commentators for the last thirty years, and has now been rightly rendered in the Revised Version, so that no one, whether scholar or not, has any more the faintest apology for misquoting it in an argument. "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" is undoubtedly the proper reading; and this gives an entirely different turn to the thought. So also does the fact, too often ignored, that these twelve, if not

simply and solely John the Baptist's disciples, as Hackett and some others think, were, at least, more than anything else, very imperfectly instructed as yet in Christian truth, and on that account destitute of the full marks of Christian discipleship. They had probably just come to Ephesus when Paul found them ; and he, noticing doubtless something peculiar in them, and knowing, also, very well what a great number of half-taught, irregularly baptized disciples there were all about, wished to ascertain their spiritual state and, hence, put this question to find out what they really understood by their discipleship. Then it came out that, although in a general, broad sense they might be styled disciples, or learners, they were by no means complete Christians, but were still in the old dispensation of the Son, having been baptized simply with John's baptism, the baptism of repentance and faith in the Coming One. As soon as they were informed of their deficiency and were properly instructed they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus, as the Messiah who had come, and the Holy Ghost came upon them. The Holy Ghost had not come upon them before, it is evident, simply because they were not Christians in the full sense of the term, were not baptized in the name of the Trinity, and

had not even heard of the giving of the Holy Spirit. The implication plainly is that all who were full-fledged Christian believers, properly instructed and baptized, as believers are now, did receive the Holy Ghost when they became believers. The only way in which any capital can be made out of this incident, by those who seek in it proof that receiving the Holy Ghost means experiencing entire sanctification, is by ignoring the great difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism and assuming that, under the former preparatory and rudimentary teaching, Christian disciples, with the full privileges of the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, could be and were made.

A very similar case is that of Cornelius and the other Gentiles who are mentioned in chapters ten, eleven, and fifteen of the Acts. It is claimed that "the conclusion is inevitable," the demonstration is "incontrovertible," from this case that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is "a synonym for entire sanctification." But to reach this result it has to be assumed, in the face of all the facts, that these men were Christian disciples before Peter came to them, that they had been born again and adopted into the family of God through faith in Jesus Christ, whereas it seems abundantly clear that this was not the case. They were simply devout, God-

fearing Gentiles, or heathen, who prayed much and gave much alms and were acceptable to God because they did so well according to the light they had. They were dissatisfied with their old faith, were ready to receive a new one, were, perhaps, almost as much Jews in point of creed as Gentiles, but were not Christian believers, in any sense of the term. It is replied that Peter declares that God cleansed their hearts "by faith." But this is simply an essential accompaniment of their conversion, nothing more. God purifies the heart of every man when he receives him into his family; to give a man a new heart is to give him a clean heart. Nowhere is it said that God perfectly purified the heart of Cornelius, or cleansed it from all sin. That is an entirely different thing. If one declares that he will cleanse a certain garment or purify a certain liquid he merely means, as a rule, that he will make it cleaner or purer than it was before; an absolutely perfect purification is not probably in his thought or his power. Every child of God is made pure in the general sense, pure as distinguished from impure, and every forward step, every accession of strength, makes him purer than he was before, though it may leave him considerably short of perfect purity. What possible reason is there for confounding purity and perfect

purity and assuming that, because God purifies a heart, he perfectly purifies it; because he makes a person clean as opposed to unclean, a saint as opposed to a sinner, he necessarily cleanses him from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit and perfects his holiness?

We come now to the scene of Pentecost, which has been greatly relied upon by many as proving that baptism with the Holy Ghost is the same as Christian perfection. But what are the facts? Setting aside the extraordinary miraculous gifts—which we do not here enter into, as they have nothing to do with the question before us—and confining our examination to that which is purely spiritual, we find substantially the same state of things here as in the cases already mentioned. The chief point to be noticed is that we have here what is practically a change from one religion to another. It was the inauguration of a new dispensation, that is, a new stage in the history of redemption, a new phase in the process of salvation. Before this the disciples had been Jews, rather than Christians; they had been thoroughly Jewish in their views, their practices, their expectations. They were far from being Christians, in the complete sense in which we use the word now of those who are born anew in the full blaze of the dispensation of the

Holy Ghost. They had been baptized simply with John's baptism, and they had been groping and stumbling in the dim twilight of the dispensation of the Son. They had as yet very imperfect apprehensions of the truths of the new religion which they were to preach. The kingdom of heaven had not yet been set up in the earth. Just as he that is least in this kingdom which was inaugurated at Pentecost is greater than John the Baptist, so is such a one greater than the apostles were before Pentecost—greater in his privileges, both intellectual and spiritual.

Hence, it is idle to try to institute a close comparison between the condition of the disciples before Pentecost and the condition of Christian believers now. The circumstances are so different that no exact parallel is possible, and the application of our ordinary terms, in anything except a vague, general way, will be quite sure to lead us astray. It is asked, sometimes with much indignation, "What! were the apostles, when with Jesus, not converted?" But the answer would have to depend on the meaning attached to the word "converted." It is a very ambiguous term, meaning many things. It does not mean precisely the same thing when used of a little child as when used of an adult, or when used of one who turns

from another form of faith to be a Christian as when used of one who simply changes his conduct, not his views. In a certain sense the apostles were doubtless converted; but the word, if applied to them, could not signify exactly the same thing as when applied to sinners who give their hearts to God in an ordinary church revival to-day. The case of the disciples before Pentecost, of Cornelius before Peter preached to him, of the twelve at Ephesus before Paul catechized them is paralleled in heathen lands now much more nearly than in Christian countries. Everyone who has been to a foreign mission field has met just such cases—men not fully instructed, not perfectly acquainted with the whole truth, doing well so far as they know, abundant in prayer, giving much alms, honest, upright, God-fearing men according to their light, and ready to go forward when more light shall come. They are not Christians, would not be reckoned so in any careful enumeration, but they are prepared to become such. They have not the Holy Ghost, for they have not heard of him; but as soon as their understandings are opened to perceive their privilege in this respect they receive him, and he, entering, purifies their heart more fully than it was purified before, and just as fully as is com-

patible with their degree of faith and consecration.

John Wesley himself is a shining example of the great difficulty of strictly classifying by our modern terms one whose views of truth underwent great changes and who really passed out of one dispensation into another, instead of simply passing from carelessness to faithfulness of life. Was Wesley really converted or not previous to the strange warming of his heart in that Moravian meeting in Aldersgate Street? He finds it hard to say himself. He wrote on one occasion, "I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God." But he subsequently added, "I am not sure of this." Again, he says, "This, then, have I learned in the ends of the earth, . . . that, alienated as I am from the life of God, I am a 'child of wrath,' an heir of hell." The greater wisdom of later years caused him to correct this hasty judgment by appending, "I believe not," and "I had even then the faith of a servant, though not of a son." In other words, he was really at that time accepted of God in the dispensation of the Father or of the Son, up to which point alone his light had thus far reached. But of the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, so far as it meant the joys of conscious adoption through an assured faith

and the clear witness of the Spirit, he as yet knew nothing. So that wonderful night, May 24th, 1738, when he received the assurance that his sins were taken away cannot strictly be termed his conversion in our usual sense, nor can it be said that he then attained entire sanctification. The facts do not sufficiently bear out either statement. All that can be truly said is that he entered upon a decidedly advanced stage of Christian experience, which gave him very different apprehensions of saving truth and a very much greater power to do good.

A strikingly similar case has occurred in more recent days—that of the distinguished author and theological teacher, the Rev. Daniel Steele, D.D. In November, 1870, he being at that time a professor in Genesee College, he tells us that, “after an earnest and persistent struggle,” he “entered into a spiritual enlightenment utterly inconceivable before, a permanent spiritual exaltation and fullness” (*Love Enthroned*, pp. 272, 273). As to his previous life he says: “My experience was never marked. I never could tell the day of my conversion. . . . Hence, my utterances have been feeble and destitute of power” (p. 274). “I will not dwell upon the unpleasant theme of a ministry of twenty years almost fruitless in conversions,

through a lack of the unction from the Holy One. . . . The Holy Spirit, though formally acknowledged and invoked, was practically ignored" (p. 278). "I believe myself to have been in the pre-pentecostal state. . . . I believe that I dwelt a long time in the dispensation of the Father, a shorter period in that of the Son, and that now at length, by the grace of God, I have entered that of the Holy Ghost. In the first, I enjoyed the first element of the kingdom, righteousness or justification—δικαιοσύνη—an act of the Father; in the second place, the legacy of the risen Jesus; and, in the third, joy, the endowment of the Holy Ghost" (pp. 292, 293).

This is very interesting and very important. We do not at all doubt but that a large part of the controversy as to the necessity and significance of the "second blessing" might be amicably settled by reference to this distinction in the real character of the change wrought at conversion. Why should it be commonly assumed that the change is always one and the same thing, or that all persons enter upon the same state of grace, the same degree of advancement, when they give themselves to God? As Dr. Steele himself says, "There is a gradation of amicable relations between an enemy and a spouse." Some are servants, some are

friends, some are sons, some are brides. And different persons gain at conversion all these different relations, or pass into one or the other of the above mentioned dispensations, according to their circumstances, their temperament, their training, their knowledge, their consecration, their faith. Very many are so definitely, thoroughly, and signally born of the Holy Spirit at conversion—born into the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, as it is the privilege of all to be in these days—that they come at that time into an experience not essentially different from that which John Wesley and Daniel Steele waited many years to get. Others at conversion—or what it would seem charitable, if not, indeed, necessary, so to call—appear to get only one foot, as it were, within the threshold of the kingdom; but, steadily, though slowly, going forward, they become established at last, even so as to be “strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man,” “rooted and grounded in love,” and “strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.” These latter, of course, will stand in a very different attitude toward further blessings or baptisms than the former, will stand in much greater need of them, and will theorize very

differently concerning them; for every one's opinions are more or less shaped, frequently with entire unconsciousness, by his experience. A comprehensive and satisfactory statement of doctrine must certainly make room for all grades and forms of experience, since there is no one pattern that can be imposed upon all.

These two modern instances throw light on the transition experienced by the disciples at Pentecost, by Cornelius, and the rest. They took a forward step, they came into a new dispensation, they received a larger measure of grace, proportioned to their new faith; and this faith was necessarily dependent on their instruction, as well as their consecration, on the reception of the new light, as well as the fuller dedication of their powers to God. This is about all that can be said with certainty. When we come to stretch these cases on the unyielding frames of modern theological systems and try to fit them out with exact terms according to our stringent metaphysical theories, difficulties arise which it is better to face than to ignore. It is the part of wisdom to look at the facts precisely as they are and adjust theories to them, rather than to distort and mangle the facts in order to adjust them to a preconceived theory. It seems to the writer that only by this latter process can bap-

tism with the Holy Ghost, as we find it in Scripture, be made either "a synonym for entire sanctification," or an "induement with power"—whatever that may mean—subsequent to entire sanctification. John Wesley had occasion in his day to rebuke this very error. In a letter given in his *Journal* (October 29, 1762), he says, "I dislike your directly or indirectly depreciating justification, saying a justified person is not in Christ, is not born of God, is not a new creature, has not a new heart, is not sanctified, not a temple of the Holy Ghost." And in a letter to Rev. Joseph Benson, in 1770, he says, speaking of being "saved from all sin and perfected in love," "If they like to call this 'receiving the Holy Ghost' they may; only the phrase in that sense is not scriptural and not quite proper, for they all 'received the Holy Ghost' when they were justified. God then 'sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father.'"

What then is "receiving the Holy Ghost," or being "baptized with the Holy Ghost?" We believe, with John Wesley, that it means, primarily, the receiving a clear witness to our acceptance with God and our adoption into his family. This common experience, the witness of the Spirit, shared by all genuine, fully instructed, thoroughly converted believers, re-

ceived at the time of their justification if they are taught to look for it, has all the marks of correspondence, more nearly, at least, than anything else, with the baptism of the Holy Ghost which we find described in the New Testament. When Peter said to the crowd of Jews at Jerusalem on that day of Pentecost, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," he apparently meant that, if they would repent of their sins and exercise faith in Jesus for their remission, showing that faith, also, by outward works and open confession in baptism, they should receive the assurance, or witness, that their sins were remitted and their repentance was accepted. So when Jesus said, "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John vii, 38), referring, as John explains, to the coming gift of the Spirit, what more natural, more inevitable, than to understand him as saying that every one who believed on him, every believer, should have the Spirit dwelling in him, and that that indwelling Spirit would infallibly show itself in works of beneficence, even as a river blesses the thirsty lands through which it flows? What can it be called but unnatural forcing of the

plain sense of the words to find here any allusion to entire sanctification? What surer way is there of depreciating justification than by robbing Christians in general of their right to this class of texts? It should be unwaveringly maintained that the Spirit of God falls upon or baptizes every properly instructed believer in Jesus Christ when he believes. If he subsequently declines from that state and loses the witness then received he should seek to have it renewed. If as his light goes on he does not correspondingly go on he will inevitably lose ground and come into doubt or darkness. Then must he seek, through repentance and faith, as at the first, a new assurance or acceptance, which may be termed, if one so likes, a new baptism.

In fact, any reviving or quickening of spiritual life, any marked influx of blessedness, any strong impression made by the Spirit of God on the soul may be called, if it is thought best, a baptism of the Holy Ghost. Whenever any of the fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, are, in a special or sudden way, produced or increased in the believer, whenever a manifest effect of the Spirit is felt or seen, there he may find and point out a baptism, or bestowment, or gift, or anointing of the Spirit. But it is a very different matter to

talk about *the* baptism of the Holy Ghost, as if it were a certain, definite thing, experienced by the disciples at Pentecost, and equally obligatory upon, and available for, us now if only we wait before God in prayer with sufficient earnestness a sufficient length of time. It ought to be declared with great positiveness that Pentecost cannot be repeated. The Holy Spirit has *come* once for all to take the place of Jesus ; the promised Comforter is here and will not depart. He abides with and in the Church. His dispensation has been set up and is going on. We have not the slightest need to wait ten days or ten hours or ten minutes for this precious gift to be poured out upon us. He is here always, and waits for us to get ready to give him larger room and warmer welcome. Whenever we do so he takes more and more complete possession of our souls, shedding abroad within us the love of God, the peace that passeth all understanding, the joy that is unspeakable. We cannot properly pray for him to come into the world ; but we may pray for him to come into our hearts if we are not conscious of having him at all, or to come more fully and possess us more completely if we are conscious of a lack in this direction. But it is well to remember that he always comes when opportunity is afforded

him. He does not need to be vehemently urged—the Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit than we are to give good gifts to our children. And, hence, if we have asked without avail we may certainly know that we have not asked properly, that we have failed to comply with the conditions of receiving.

A baptism with the Holy Ghost, as the words are used now—that is, a quickening, or strengthening, or uplifting of the spiritual life—may be a very great thing or a comparatively small thing, something permanent or something evanescent, according to circumstances. So, being “filled with the Holy Ghost” may mean much or more or most. For “full” is a word having a great diversity of significance and very rarely used in an exact or absolute way. A number of people in the Bible are especially said to have been full of, or filled with, the Holy Ghost—namely, Jesus, John the Baptist, Zacharias, Elizabeth, Peter, Stephen and the others chosen with him, Barnabas, and Paul. But there is no indication that the word was employed with any theological or scientific exactness, or that these different persons are to be regarded as being in precisely the same spiritual condition and having the same degree of spiritual strength. The general idea seems to be that they were especially

conscious of the presence of God with them, were thoroughly devoted to his service, and were persons of great zeal and faith and power. To attempt to put upon it a more definite meaning than this is to depart from the spirit of the Scriptures ; for the Bible is not a scientific treatise or a work on systematic theology.

Our conclusion is that all true Christians, when they are born of the Spirit, are filled with the Spirit up to their capacity at that time, are baptized with the Spirit, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, even the spirit of adoption, or the spirit of holiness, whereby they cry to God, "Father!" and are made holy. Then, as they go on, having it for their chief business to perfect this holiness which has been planted in them, to grow out of infancy into manhood, to become of full age, mature, perfect, they will have, from time to time, other special quickenings, or baptisms, or blessings, from the Holy Spirit. The most important of these they may, perhaps, call the "second" blessing, counting it, as indeed it is, a very wonderful and precious and stirring epoch in their experience. But they should not fall into the habit of calling it "the" baptism of the Holy Ghost, in any such way as to obscure or minimize the importance of that first baptism which they had when the Spirit told them they

were born again, or of those other subsequent baptisms which they undoubtedly will have if they press diligently on. A close walk with God, such as all Christians may and should have, implies not only constant communion with the Spirit, but also special bestowments of favor, special upliftings and enlightenings and empowerings from time to time, as occasion may demand. Let them come—the more the better. But let no one be in haste to conclude, with reference to any one of them, that it is the final touch, absolutely eradicating or removing the very last possible remnant of depravity; and let no one call it, ignoring the uniform usage of Scripture, “the” baptism with the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER VII.

Experience.

THERE can be no doubt that while, on the one hand, a person's theory more or less influences his experience, his experience, on the other hand, largely affects his theory. The two have a mutually interactive relation that makes any consideration of the one incomplete without some reference to the other. The reader of these pages will very naturally and legitimately inquire what the writer's experience has been, what qualifications he has for offering practical advice on these most practical matters. It is a favorite method with many prominent representatives of the class whose views on this subject of growth in holiness the writer has had to antagonize, when confronted with trains of reasoning they cannot follow and arguments they cannot answer, to fall back upon the easy *argumentum ad hominem* and retort that, if the "opposer of holiness"—for with this Satanic appellation they habitually dub their adversary—only had a clean heart, if he were sufficiently weaned

from his various idols to cut loose from the world and get an advanced experience, he would abandon his speculative objections and find no further difficulty with the theories of the specialists. This reply is of the "cheap and nasty" sort and, in general, serves to reveal the weakness of the cause which adopts it. Yet it has sometimes a slight basis in truth, sufficient to make it worthy of some little attention; that is, there are those who, according to their own subsequent confession, have had at the bottom of their doctrinal doubts or denials a half-hidden, but partly suspected, unwillingness to face obloquy and make a complete consecration to Christ. Their theological mists have rapidly cleared away just as soon as they fell, with profoundest humility, at the Saviour's feet and were perfectly willing to be accounted fools for his sake. But, because these cases exist, to make such sweeping assertions as some people indulge in and to infer or assert that there cannot be thoroughly honest, unequivocally conscientious, and unmistakably competent differences of opinion on these things, growing, not out of defects of life, but out of sincerest convictions of intellect and soul, is a *non sequitur*, discreditable alike to the head and the heart of those who are guilty of it.

The writer feels moved to say in self-defense

that he is not one of those who are practically ignorant concerning the things of which he has treated and whose evidence can be ruled out of court in this easy and supercilious fashion. He was trained from boyhood in the views from which he now finds himself compelled to dissent, and he has thoroughly passed through the usual round of experiences which are supposed to qualify people for right opinions on this theme. By ancestry, by education, by strong personal predilection, by uncommonly varied opportunities for private intercourse with some of the best saints of Christ's earthly kingdom, and by close study of all the accessible literature treating on the subject during a period of some thirty years, the writer of these pages has seemed to himself somewhat fitted for such discourse, if not, indeed, rather pointedly and peremptorily bidden by divine Providence to set himself to the task of elucidating this grand theme.

The experience now immediately following has already appeared in print, and is given substantially as found in an article called "Twenty Years," which was published in 1880 in the *Lucknow Witness* of India, while the writer was its editor, and, also, in a contribution made in 1888 to *Forty Witnesses* at the solicitation of its editor, the Rev. S. O. Garrison.

I had the unspeakable benefit of a godly ancestry, reaching back for some centuries. Thomas Mudge, a native of Devonshire, England, was one of the first generation of the Puritan settlers on these shores, coming to the Massachusetts Bay Colony about 1640. His son, John, held various offices in the town of Malden, including that of tithingman; and there is record that the town voted to "John Mudge and others liberty to build a gallery in the meetinghouse," which shows him to have been active in the affairs of the Church. His son John was for forty years the greatly respected deacon of the south parish in Malden. Enoch Mudge, grandson of the deacon, was among the most prominent of the members of the First Church in Lynn, and none gave Jesse Lee a warmer welcome. He and Benjamin Johnson were the founders of the first Methodist church in Lynn; and Enoch's name stands first on the record of the first class formed by Lee in Massachusetts. Enoch's son Enoch has the unique honor of being the first itinerant preacher raised for Methodism on the cold New England soil, and may well be called one of the makers of Methodism in these Eastern States. The fifth son of the elder Enoch was called James. He was for very many years one of the pillars of the

first Methodist church in Lynn, a marked man, both in the community and in the Church, for unbending integrity, deep piety, sound sense, enlightened views, progressive spirit, and solid character. Three of his sons became ministers. The eldest of them, James, was a most devoted and useful pastor, a member of the New England Conference, who died in Greenfield, Mass., forty-eight years ago at the age of thirty-four, but whose memory is still very warmly cherished by the few survivors who knew him.

Coming of such stock and being brought up by a most painstaking and judicious mother, who was herself wholly consecrated to God and a friend of Mrs. Phœbe Palmer, what could I be but a very good boy. My conversion, which took place at the age of twelve in a quiet revival in the little village of South Harwich, Mass., September, 1856, was not attended by any violent emotions. It was simply a determination, under the gentle stimulus of the special interest attending the revival, to take up publicly the position, and perform the duties, of an openly avowed Christian believer. Such I became. I joined in full the old Common Street Church, Lynn, Mass., whither I had gone to prepare for college, on my thirteenth birthday, April 5, 1857.

I faithfully attended to all Christian duties, speaking and praying in class and prayer meetings, from which I was never absent, and serving as librarian in the Sunday school. I did not falter for a day, or so much as once think of turning back; and my joy in Jesus steadily increased as I came to know him more. Before long, however, as I continued my school life and church life, I began to find that there were certain things hard to do and for the doing of which I did not seem to possess sufficient strength. I shrank from the cross involved in talking personally about religion with my unconverted classmates, and I fell into the indulgence of a few doubtful practices in reference to which my conscience was not wholly at ease. I found myself slipping into a state of halfway service, a state wherein I was conscious of being only partially consecrated to God, the state wherein, it is to be feared, a very large proportion of the Church continually live.

Happily I took alarm after a little, and, seeing very clearly that there was no permanent peace or power to be had except in being decisively one thing or another, my mind became greatly exercised on the subject of full salvation. From reading a great deal about this and hearing it much spoken of at my home—

where the *Guide to Holiness* was taken and Mrs. Palmer's books were on the table—as well as elsewhere, I came to have a strong desire for its attainment. So, when I went in August, 1860, to the annual camp meeting at Eastham, on Cape Cod, as I was accustomed to do from year to year, it was with an earnest hope that I might receive this great blessing. But Monday evening, August 13, the last night of the meeting, came without my having reached anything very definite. I had consecrated all to the best of my ability, going away several times into the woods and giving up everything that I could recollect. But this did not seem to be anything of moment. I had no great struggle, such as I had heard others describe; yet it did not seem to me that there was anything withheld from the Lord. I knew not what to do next. I had an indefinite idea that importunate prayer was necessary, and that if I prayed hard enough some marvelous change would come over me. But the simple step of appropriating faith I failed to apprehend.

The Rev. Charles Nichols, a good Congregational brother from Boston and long known as a successful evangelist, in a private conversation made the matter plain, clearing up every difficulty and showing how I needed just to take God at his word, without waiting for feel-

ing or any other evidence of the work performed than the plain declaration of the Lord, who cannot lie. This sufficed to break the last link that bound me to the old life. Silently and alone, as I bowed in prayer under the oak trees, I firmly made up my mind to believe God and determined that for the future, relying entirely upon his strength, I would bear every cross and be a whole-souled Christian. In a prayer meeting in the tent, between nine and ten that night, I made open avowal that the blessing I had sought was now obtained, having been claimed by simple faith. I felt no sudden, overpowering bliss; but a deep, sweet peace, as of the conflict over and the harbor gained, gently stole over my soul. It was certainly a memorable hour, a turning point in my life, from which dates a decided change in my experience. I returned to school a different individual. There was no more shirking of duty. I implicitly obeyed whatever I felt to be the orders of God. I bore clear and frequent testimony to the full salvation with which God had so wonderfully enriched my soul. At college (Middletown, Conn.), whither I went in 1861, I took a leading part in aggressive religious work and in promoting the highest type of spirituality.

My steps have been forward from that day in

August, 1860, to this. Each year, without exception, has been an improvement upon its predecessors. There has never been anything that could be called a period of lapse or back-sliding. Nevertheless, after a time, both while in college and subsequently, I gradually became aware that the work performed upon me at the time above described was not so deep and thorough as I had supposed. I was conscious of feelings which looked so suspiciously like ambition, pride, discontent, and selfishness that I could not feel perfectly at ease about the matter. The theory in which I had been trained taught that all these things had been entirely removed at the time of the blessing, and that what I felt now were only infirmities, mistakes, and temptations. I tried to think them so; but when I was most candid and thoroughly honest with myself the explanation failed to fully satisfy me. In short, I grew more and more convinced as the years went on that in my case, at least (and, it seemed to me, also in the case of all others I met), after the special blessing there was need of further consecrations from time to time, deepening, extending, and perfecting the work. In other words, I felt and saw that the sanctification wrought at conversion and at the subsequent epoch was, in both cases, entire up to the light

then given, and no further. Absolutely perfect light was not given either at one time or at the other; and, hence, as the light subsequently increased, a subsequent corresponding work in the heart remained to be done.

It is on these lines that my experience has steadily and gloriously progressed for the last twenty-five years. There has been no year when it has not gone forward; but there have been some years of unusually marked advance, some seasons of very rich revelation of God's presence and power. One such year was that in which I went as a missionary to India—1873—laying upon the altar all the fond ambitions, dreams, and hopes of life, all the delights of home and friends and native land, in a far more thorough way than ever before—a way not possible to me before, because the actual pinch and stress of the practical test had not previously been brought within my reach. Another such season came during my last full year in India—1882—when, owing to some very bitter trials, a fuller disclosure was made to me than ever before as to certain remains of the self-life needing further attention. Sunday, July 9, 1882, alone in my room at Shah-jehanpoor, God gave me such a baptism of love as I shall never forget to all eternity. The scene is almost as vividly before me to-

day as then. On my knees for hours, with tears and strong cryings, in deep penitence for the past, in deeper determination for the future, God revealed to me a height of privilege, in the way of constant, smiling good nature and triumphant repose, which I had not before been possessing. I comprehended with great completeness that, no matter what might come, there was always a way in which everybody could be sincerely loved, and so the bird-song need never for a moment cease in my happy heart. The availableness of God and the loveableness of man were manifested to me in a way indescribable, and the effect upon my life ever since has been very marked. Again, in 1887 I had a very wonderful development of faith, making the unseen things far more real than ever before. There was an intensity and fullness of spiritual life not previously known, a settling down more thoroughly into Christ and a putting him on more completely, a greater oneness of will with God, and a more exact conformity to his image in little things, as well as more simplicity and humility.

But I did not then, even as I do not now, reckon all these graces to be absolutely perfected in me, with the self-life absolutely dead, no minutest trace or smallest particle of it any more visible to the all-penetrating gaze of the

great Searcher of hearts. My previous experiences forbade me so to think. Because I had found, however positively all appeared well, that when increasingly keen and unexpected tests were from time to time brought to bear, a little of self always showed its head, calling for further purification, further repression. Hence, I inferred it would probably always be so, as long, at least, as I remained on the earth. I was able to say at that time, as I believe I can say now, that to me but one thing seemed desirable or valuable in heaven or earth, and that was the will of God. And everything which comes to me I welcome as God's will for me. So far as I am in any way conscious, my whole being, without the slightest reservation or hesitation, goes out after him and abides in him. Loving only what God loves and willing only what God wills, I find no room for disappointment, but only for delight and thanksgiving, in all he sends me. Surely this is the land of Beulah, if not something more. It is, indeed, heaven begun below. "For to me to live is Christ."

To render a little more complete this chapter of personal experience I append a tract, which I first wrote in August, 1890, as an article for *The Christian Advocate*. It was then reprinted, at the demand of many who found

a blessing in it, by the Willard Tract Repository, Boston, where it can be obtained.

THIRTY YEARS WITH JESUS.

It was in August, 1860, that I took Christ for my complete Saviour, freely surrendering to him my whole heart; and so, although there had been a Christian life of the usual mixed, unsatisfactory character for four years previously, it is only these thirty years now finished that can really be called with full appropriateness a walk with Jesus. It has occurred to me that this would be a fitting time to set down some reflections resulting from this experience of nearly one third of a century. It would certainly be a pity if concentration of thought and variety of observation during so long a period could yield nothing that would be of benefit to other wayfarers on the journey of life.

In the first place, I may say that those distant beginnings have a different look, after the lapse of these years, from what they had at the time. The state on which, after special instruction, resolute consecration, and a definite forthputting of faith, I entered at the Eastham Camp Meeting in 1860 I called Christian perfection, entire sanctification, and the being cleansed from all sin. I have long ago ceased

to apply to it these terms. There doubtless is a certain sense in which they can be taken that makes them after a fashion appropriate ; but since there exists a far deeper or broader sense, equally legitimate and scriptural, if not, indeed, much more so, the impropriety of their indiscriminate and unexplained use would seem to be sufficiently evident. I abandoned them in obedience to such wise counsels and examples as are found in Paul's words (taken from the Revised Version)—2 Cor. vi, 3 : " Giving no occasion of stumbling in anything, that our ministration be not blamed ; " 1 Cor. x, 32 : " Give no occasion of stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the Church of God ; " 1 Cor. viii, 9 : " Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to the weak ; " 2 Cor. xi, 12 : " That I may cut off occasion from them which desire an occasion ; " 1 Cor. x, 23 : " All things are lawful ; but all things are not expedient." And again : " All things are lawful ; but all things edify not." Also, in Wesley's words : " Give no offense which can possibly be avoided. . . . Be particularly careful in speaking of yourself. You may not, indeed, deny the work of God ; but speak of it when you are called thereto in the most inoffensive manner possible. Avoid all magnificent, pompous words ; indeed, you

need give it no general name—neither perfection, sanctification, the second blessing, nor the having attained. Rather speak of the particulars which God has wrought for you.”

What, then, did happen to me thirty years ago that it should be made so important an epoch from which to date a higher life? It was, as nearly as I can make out, simply that apprehension of Jesus to be my all-sufficient empowerer for every occasion which naturally comes upon a consecration greatly increased in thoroughness and, indeed, made complete up to the measure of light at that time vouchsafed. It marked, accordingly, a new beginning in the religious life and opened the way at once for an indefinite, but rapid, increase in knowledge and faith, in self-crucifixion, and in the acquisition of divine love. It put an end to the old haltings, and set the soul forward on a keen hunt for the best things made possible by atoning blood. It was not the end of sanctification, as at that time I ignorantly supposed; neither was it, of course, precisely the beginning; but it was an immensely important stage in the process, since it settled the point that all known duty was to be promptly done and all known sin resolutely refrained from.

This being the case, it may fairly be inquired

in what direction have been the main subsequent developments of these thirty years. For one thing, self has steadily decreased and Christ has increased. By self here I mean, of course, not the natural, innocent, necessary self which constitutes one's individuality and which will remain in substance, however high the state of grace attained, but the abnormal, unnatural, obtrusive self which clamors proudly, impatiently for attention, and whose presence is proof positive that the disorder introduced among the powers by the fall has not yet been wholly rectified. This self, whose existence is universally recognized in such terms as "self-will" and "selfishness," must die by crucifixion. The process is necessarily somewhat slow, but the results are proportionately precious and enduring. For as the old man goes out the new man, Christ Jesus, enters, until, in the fullest and most exact sense, Christ himself is in spirit reproduced and he lives again in the person of his perfectly faithful follower. How glorious the goal—Christliness; which is, of course, a thoroughly perfected holiness and the highest sinlessness.

Another thing which has been noticed in the progress of the years may be called the growing domination of faith. By faith here is intended, not the mere taking of God at his

word, which is a rudimental thing where there would not seem to be much room for growth, but that action of the faith faculty by which the unseen is clearly perceived, the eternal is made vividly real, the divine is readily recognized, and God is energetically apprehended. This is the faith which easily overcomes the world and quenches the fiery darts of the wicked one; the faith which fills everything with God, beholds him everywhere, and welcomes him in all events. Such a faith makes each occurrence providential and renders disappointment impossible. It creates such a measure of unworldliness and heavenly-mindedness, gives so keen a joy and so profound a peace, that the soul is ushered into a state but little short of heaven itself.

As to love, this has more and more completely taken possession, extending its sphere year by year, almost month by month. There have been times when it has received great accessions of power, and has seemed to almost cry out for new worlds to conquer, new affronts or neglects to deluge with its tide of affection. At other periods it has been more quiet, as holding itself in reserve for its opportunity. It has banished all fear that has any element of torment, and so, according to John, has perhaps a right to style itself perfect. But,

since the treasure is held in an "earthen vessel" and its manifestations must be guided by a fallible judgment, there can be no guarantee that it shall always appear perfect to those who observe its workings.

Thirty years! How little of them, of what they brought and what they taught, can be chronicled in a single column of print! Mingled thankfulness and humiliation attend the retrospect. While there is thankfulness very deep and great for the patient goodness of God, there is humiliation correspondingly profound that no better use has been made of it. A constant and an undeviating endeavor has resulted in steady heavenward advance; but it would seem as if, with such advantages, the advance should have been far swifter and more extensive. For as much of ripeness in the grace divine as has been reached we would unfeignedly give the entire glory to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. For such deficiencies and frailties as still remain—tarrying, alas! far beyond the time when they might and should have been done away—we ask and receive the pardoning mercy of the triune God.

The questions given below I prepared at the close of 1893. They were printed in the first

number of *The Christian Advocate* for 1894, and in response to a widespread desire were issued in tract form by the Tract Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They are inserted here as a kind of additional personal testimony; for they were written out of the author's heart, are the result of much meditation, and express, at least, his strong desires. They show the directions in which he is growing, the special points of spiritual progress to which he is paying constant attention, and in which, by the blessing of God, he is steadily making gains.

QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

Am I at all below any former spiritual position, or is there a steady upgrade maintained?

Have I found out the weakest points in my character, and am I taking the utmost pains to overcome my special besetments?

Do I pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, and rejoice evermore?

Have I peace at all times, by all means?

Is there constant victory over temptation and cloudless communion with God?

Am I growing in humility and in the submission of my will to the will of others?

Am I improving in patience, serenity, equanimity, and continual good nature?

Is there intense longing in my heart for the utmost likeness to Christ and the swiftest progress in divine things?

Have I an enthusiasm for religion, a passion for doing good, an unappeasable thirst for the improvement of personal character?

Is there steady growth in the promptness and heartiness of my obedience to the divine commands?

Am I conforming myself more and more closely day by day to those special indications of God's will which he makes to me by his providence?

Is the divine will, come in whatever shape it may, inexpressibly sweet and delightful to me, because of the great love embodied in it?

Does each hour open out as a page of deepening interest in the book of life, because I am studying how to walk with God in all the smallest, as well as the largest, transactions of the day, seeking guidance and finding communion from moment to moment?

Am I so suffused with God, so deeply in love with his blessed will, so filled with a sense of its transcendent excellence, that no suffering in its service is counted worth a thought?

Do I turn to good account, as the best helps to growth in grace, the ill usage, the affronts, the losses, the trials, and the troubles of life?

Is it the uppermost desire of my heart to show to the world the worth of its Redeemer, and is no opportunity for praising Jesus left unimproved?

Have I adopted as my specialty absolute devotion to God, so that I talk more with him than with anyone else, think more of him than of anyone else, and care more for his favor than for that of all the world beside?

Is my religion a winsome one, my character luscious and fragrant, so that all who have dealings with me are compelled to acknowledge the presence of a more than earthly influence, and all observers are profoundly impressed with the beauty of Jesus shining forth in me?

Do I rob God of nothing, refuse him nothing, require of him nothing?

Am I kindly and thoughtful for the comfort of others, willing to serve, slow to push personal claims, quick to sympathize and help?

Is each day begun with a fresh surrender of self to God, a rededication of all to the master, and a careful planning how to make the hours full of loving service, rendered in his name?

Do I constantly realize the divine Presence, so that it pervades and permeates all thoughts and feelings, all words and deeds?

Do I appropriate the promises and put to

the proof my full rights of partnership with Jesus?

Am I perfectly indifferent to all except God's will, thoroughly content with what he sends me, pleased with all he does, and pleasing to him in all I do?

Have I firmly resolved that my ideal of a perfect Christian, if not completely realized in the year just ahead, shall at least be more nearly reached than ever before?

HONEY FROM MANY HIVES.

How can we better conclude this little book, which, we trust, above all things else will lead many people to personal growth in holiness, than by bringing together from many sources a variety of spiritual counsels which we have ourselves found very helpful in promoting the religious life? They are drawn from a wide range of reading. They are the fruit, also, of no little thought and prayer. We cannot give in many cases the name of the particular author who first suggested or embodied the truths here presented; and we have in nearly all the cases so altered them, that they might be shaped more to our liking, that it would scarcely be fair to credit them in their present form to their original sources. We must content ourselves, then, with mentioning the prin-

cial books from which the sentences about to be submitted or the thoughts leading to them have chiefly come. They are in the main the books of the ages, that will never wear out : Fénelon's works, especially his *Christian Counsel* and *Spiritual Letters*; Francis of Sale's works, especially his *Introduction to a Devout Life* and *Practical Piety*; Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*; Scupoli's *Spiritual Combat*; Rodriguez's *Christian Perfection*; Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living*; Rutherford's *Letters*; John Wesley's *Sermons* and *Letters*; Faber's works, both in prose and poetry; Dr. T. C. Upham's works—*Principles of the Interior or Hidden Life*, *The Life of Faith*, *Divine Union*, *Life of Madame Guyon*, and *Life of Catharine Adorna*; and Dean Goulburn's *Thoughts on Personal Religion* and *The Pursuit of Holiness*. Whoever will give his nights and days to the study of these volumes, reading and rereading, marking, copying, digesting, and adapting to present needs, as has been our personal habit for a very long time, will feel amply repaid and can hardly fail to show very manifest effects in the expansion of his own soul. Without further preface, except a most earnest prayer that the reader, both from this chapter and from the whole book of which it is a part, may gather great stores of abiding good, we submit

for his edification and delectation a small selection from a large harvest of most nourishing grain.

Deal directly with God, receiving all from him, giving all to him, doing all for him, talking over all with him.

Diligently deny self; for just in proportion as the self-life within us decreases the Christ-life within us increases. Almost every event of every day will afford some scope for self-renunciation.

Destroy disappointment by restricting desire to that blessed will of God which can never fail to be accomplished. Be entirely and sublimely indifferent to all else.

See some good in everyone, and so have a pleasant word of praise for all, to be uttered whenever a suitable opening is found.

Be a servant to all for the Saviour's sake, and despise not chances to give cups of cold water.

Look to it that the standard of your personal perfection—of what it is possible for you to become in point of likeness to Jesus—is constantly advancing, and let there be a progressive realization of the ever progressing ideal.

Bear without repining; do without delaying; be without boasting.

Religion must be a business. Every true Christian does what he ought, whether he likes it or not, just as a genuine business man does what he can or what he finds profitable, not simply what he likes.

Yield readily in matters of mere personal preference, but stand firm as a rock if it be clearly a question of principle.

Every act, however minute, is either a duty or a sin. Nothing is morally indifferent. Therefore cultivate carefully the power of spiritual discernment, and daily decrease the gap between the ideal and the real in this particular.

Be ingenious in making excuses for others, cultivating kind thoughts about them, and giving them credit for the best motives ; but call yourself to a strict account for all departures from the perfect way, remembering that where so much is given much will be required.

Give at least as much thought to the positive as to the negative side of the Christian life ; to the acquisition of virtue as to the deliverance from vice ; to being filled with the Spirit as to being freed from sin. The former is the quickest path to the latter.

Never take offense ; it is a greater sin than to give it, and is a clear manifestation of pride. Be not suspicious or sensitive. Keep always

in good humor, believing that you are loved and honored as much as you deserve.

Put more and more love into the little things done for God, since this will please him better than the doing of greater things without fervor or somewhat grudgingly.

When you cannot honestly respect or esteem people get a great pity for them, and so let love creep in under the wings of heavenly compassion.

Not to be vexed with one's self or anxious about spiritual progress or troubled at occasional defeats, and yet to be unweariedly pressing on, with a cheerful, immovable determination to gain the loftiest heights, is true wisdom.

Insist on turning everything into a means of spiritual improvement, a help to religious growth, so that even afflictions shall bring us nearer God and thus be subjects for thanksgiving.

Secure a constant sense of the divine presence, a recollectedness that is unbroken; for only when the mind is thus stayed on God can we be kept in perfect peace.

To please God a little more perfectly is great gain, and well repays any amount of effort, however large.

As to God, faith; as to men, love. If this be fully gained all is gained.

Everything which befalls us comes from God for our good.

All disquiet and disturbance spring from self and displease God.

Bodily stillness, a calm exterior, have an appreciable influence in helping the inward rest.

Tranquillity is the daughter of the love of God and of the resignation of our own will.

What to others would seem unprofitable niceties become essential points to the soul that is eagerly bent on the utmost destruction of self.

If we were faultless we should not be so much annoyed by the defects of those with whom we associate. The trouble is that the defects of our neighbors interfere with our own.

It is possible to get a fuller taste of Christ and heaven in every common meal than most people get in the sacrament.

We do not really lose time, provided the apparent loss was inevitable and we bear it with gentleness and patience. The same remark applies to the loss of money.

When our will is in a state of simple expectation, fully prepared for anything that God chooses to send, it may be said to be lost in the divine will, as starlight is lost in sunlight.

When our will goes forth as promptly and

powerfully in directions uncongenial to the natural feelings as in those congenial, then it may be regarded as in perfect union with God's will.

Every moment as it meets us is a true and unalterable expression of God's wonderful good pleasure concerning us.

The absence of self-centered or unsanctioned desire is the essential characteristic of the state of divine union.

Lack of faith to receive from God the power which we absolutely need, and which he freely, continually offers us, lies at the root of every failure in right living.

To do all things from a single desire to please God, out of love to him, and because it is his will is, indeed, great perfection and brings unspeakable bliss.

Impatience, even though it be but slight, always involves willfulness and a lack of perfect submission to the providential hindrances against which we run.

The availableness of God and the lovable-ness of men are two things which very few of us sufficiently appreciate.

To have always humble thoughts of ourselves, more kindly thoughts of our fellow-men, and more trustful, loving thoughts of God must be our steadfast aim.

Our life will be made doubly sublime if we do all as Jesus would do, in his spirit, and, also, as unto Jesus, finding his representatives to be ministered unto in all around us.

To do his will, to love his law, to believe his word, to speak his praise, to think his thoughts, and to do all this habitually, will soon make us very much like him.

It richly pays to give up the good things of life in order to have the best things, the things of the upper kingdom.

To our own interest, repose, reputation, or even life, the honor of Christ must be always preferred.

An extension of the scope of God's will to the more minute matters of momentary occurrence, and increasingly exact conformity to that will in them, furnish a magnificent and practically inexhaustible field for progress.

That soul which desires only the will of God is freed from bondage to the fears and desires of this world, and dwells in perfect peace, in every state content, though surrounded by uncertainties.

Finding our own pleasure in the will of God is much better than simply yielding our own pleasure to the will of God.

It is not possible to have unbounded confidence in God, with all its unbounded delights,

until we have an unbounded abandonment of self.

Be insatiate after Christlikeness. What else is there in heaven or earth so worthy of effort?

The only thing anywhere desirable or valuable is God's will.

He is truly rich, both in feeling and in fact, who realizes all that is meant by full partnership with God Almighty.

"Take time to be holy" is good advice. And it is pleasant, also, to think how much time that cannot be used for anything else with true profit, as, oftentimes, when lying wakeful on our beds or being whirled along in railway carriages, can be turned to excellent account by letting the soul stream up to God in prayer and praise.

If our intention is perfectly pure we have no need to concern ourselves about results, for God is pledged to see to them.

If we love God for himself, and not for his gifts, we shall love him equally under all circumstances, even when the gifts are taken away; for he does not change.

Have we love enough for God's will and for Christlikeness to choose suffering because it will bring out the latter and exemplify the former?

To promptly identify every event with God's

will and our will with every event shows that we are truly far along in the divine life.

To a heart filled with God the world, including all its treasures and pleasures, is a very small thing indeed.

He who loves much, prays much ; he who prays much, labors.

Expression intensifies feeling and exercises faith ; therefore, talk more and sing more about Jesus.

It is a good plan to take some single great text or truth and see how perfectly one can embody it for a single day.

It is well to pick out a few of the very finest, richest hymns and repeat them daily, sucking from them new sweetness and strength with each repetition.

If Christ's presence makes our paradise and where he is is heaven, then we are independent of earthly circumstances ; for we may always have him in our heart.

Wishing that we were better is a very poor substitute for willing to be better ; the latter alone is allowable. Not more desire, but more determination, is necessary to carry us far on and up in divine things.

When one is conscious of perfect freedom from all envy and jealousy and discontent at seeing others of inferior ability preferred before

us in public favor or pecuniary emolument, then the bird in the heart sings sweetly and a greater victory has been gained than the mightiest conqueror on earth can boast of.

To put and keep the world, our particular world, completely under our feet is an attainment of great magnitude, an evidence of conquering faith.

To die to the desire of great usefulness is something to which God often calls his chosen ones.

Just to win God's constant smile and worthily represent the Master is ambition enough for the best and sufficiently exhausts all energy.

Inordinate and self-centered desires furnish the groundwork for all our temptations.

Obedience, love, and faith are different sides of the same prism, each helping the other, each transformable into the other.

A vivid sense of the intimate nearness of the Saviour, a complete and permanent realization of his actual presence, as one to be spoken to and walked with, may be so cultivated and acquired as to become a tremendous power in shaping and forming the whole life.

With the trains as they go, with the hours as they strike, with the horses as they pass, we may connect holy thoughts and be reminded of the ever-present Father.

It is never well to try to trust, but it is always well to try to know ; confidence in God will spring from right knowledge of him.

There is a closer walk with God possible to me to-day than there was yesterday ; and my closest possible is different from that of my neighbor's.

The best map of Beulah land is found in the twenty-third psalm, the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and the First Epistle of John.

We may be enthusiastic without being fanatical, full of divine fire, but free from wildfire.

A feeling of absolute self-insufficiency is the only thing to make available the all-sufficiency of Christ.

There is no place where so much hard work can be put in with such small visible results as in the perfecting of character ; therefore, have patience, my soul.

A man may be really a great deal better without appearing very much so to the ordinary or average observer.

An increasing unworldliness, an unostentatious putting away of self in little things, a more nearly unbroken serenity, a steadier self-control, a firmer patience, a profounder humility are marks of spiritual progress which do not make much show.

The margin is, in most cases, comparatively small within which the changes in our character must take place as the years go on.

It is better not even to use words, as we often carelessly do, which imply a choice on our part aside from the divine will.

Incense must be continually burning unto God on the unseen altar of our heart. That which is consumed in the fire must be our own will.

To the hungry soul everything is sweet ; so when we are hungry for God his coming to us is precious, by whatever avenue he approaches.

If we recognize in the unwelcome visitor who interrupts our plan for the morning or afternoon a messenger from the Father to whom all our time and strength belong, we shall save ourselves much friction, preserve our peace of mind, and accomplish far more in the end.

Resolute, even violent, self-denial is generally called for, and that repeatedly, before the self-life is really killed.

To love to be unknown is not necessary, provided we heartily love God's will, even when it means obscurity.

Daily we may get dearer to Christ and have a deeper delight in doing duty.

The death of desire is the destruction of disappointment.

Recollecting the divine presence and recognizing the divine will make up a large part of the divine life.

The ancient Jewish saying, that no man can see God and live, has a Christian application in the truth that the more we see God the more self will die.

Cloudless communion and complete content in Christ are every believer's blood-bought birthright.

Let the Lord be your leader, your law, your light, your love.

He who is full of faith will be full of feeling and fruit.

We are responsible for fighting well, not for conquering; hence, we never need fail.

Our real end in the spiritual life must not be self-improvement, but the displacement of self by God.

Since nothing is troublesome that we do willingly, our troubles must depart when our wills are fully in line with God's.

If we are really the Lord's and have given up calling our souls our own we can accept our necessary insignificance joyfully, for it is wholly God's affair what becomes of us and whether or not we are useful or important.

To get out of self into God, or to have God fully occupy us, displacing self, is the whole of religion.

Do not speak of godsend, lest you thus in speech prove infidel to the glorious fact that everything which comes to us is from God.

No one can greatly resemble Jesus who does not live for the whole world.

Make full use of God's strength each moment by self-distrusting, all-confiding, unre-served reliance upon him.

There is greater merit in obeying man for God's sake than in obeying God himself directly; so, too, in conferring kindness upon men for Christ's sake.

It is doubt of God's goodness, wisdom, or power that disturbs our peace; when we fully believe that he knows what is good for us better than we do, loves us more tenderly than we do ourselves, and is amply able to carry out his purposes concerning us, in spite of men or devils, we shall have most blissful rest all the time.

The soul that has ceased to find its happiness in any earthly attachments is for the first time truly free.

How glorious to be able to triumph in the triumph of our enemies, if we have them, just as much as in the triumph of our friends, be-

cause in both cases equally we consider that the will of the Lord is done ! What can harm or disturb such a saint ?

There is need of care that we do not take satisfaction in our virtues or count them as really our own.

Ever victorious, in truth, is the soul that can sincerely say,

It is enough, whate'er befall,
To know that Christ is all in all.

To profoundly adore all of God's unknown and uncomprehended purposes, simply because they are his, is a mark of perfect resignation.

“ The soil for the harvest of pain is brought down from the peaks of pride by the torrents of desire.”—*George Macdonald*.

Since fear is faithlessness and wishing is foolishness, as well as discontent, it is our business to have done with both.

One can do nothing, as well as something, in the name of God ; there is a religious resting, no less than a religious working.

A perfect trust in God is tested most when all goes well, for then we are very apt to find ourselves trusting in his gifts, if not in ourselves.

Only he has a right to be happy in this sad world whose faith in God is such that the eter-

nal glory which these afflictions are producing is vividly present to him.

No evil is permitted by our kind Father to befall us except for the production of a greater good.

He who belongs to God has no other responsibility but to know and do his will.

A virtue is really acquired when we perform its acts easily and gladly; it is perfectly acquired when we perform its acts with perfect ease and gladness, that is, with a promptness and heartiness that cannot be increased.

He who seeks only the will of God finds a special delight in suffering, since then his delight cannot be in the thing itself, but in the loving will behind it. The clear, pure water can be seen in a glass dish much better than in a gold one, for then nothing obstructs the view of the water.

The one thing needful is a heart stayed wholly on God. As in physical exercises, so in spiritual, to act slowly, so as to put greater precision and force into the action, is often well; we must avoid slovenliness and slackness in our dealings with God.

Instead of merely making the best of it, we should count it to be really the best.

The laughter of the soul at the music of the divine will is very pleasing unto God.

The constant sunshine of the Saviour's presence makes all our graces grow apace.

What freedom is in the thought that we have none to please but Jesus, and what calmness it gives!

The fountain, not the force pump, should be the model for the Christian's thankfulness.

If sacred melodies and sweet heart harmonies are sounding within we shall care but little for the turmoil without.

When obedience is kept at the extreme verge of light, then, and only then, can God say to us, "This is my beloved child, in whom I am well pleased."

We need to walk softly before God, so as not by the clatter of our shoes to miss a single word of his precious communications.

A hasty word, an ungentle expression, a cynical, scornful tone, grieve the Spirit.

It is our privilege to meet every enemy with a shout of faith and of victory, counting him a foe already conquered in Jesus Christ, our Leader.

We need a more interior spirit and a greater intensity of love, rather than larger outward activities.

They have a blessed hiding place in God who belong to the secret society of the Holy Ghost.

They who seek Jesus instead of joy, the Blessor instead of the blessing, take the quickest and surest way to get all they want.

Only as we are keenly tested by tribulation can we really know that we are wholly consecrated to God.

God's assisting blows—in other words, his afflictive providences—are indispensable to our complete separation from creature trust.

Volitional experience is better than emotional experience; that is, willing is more reliable than feeling, as a test of consecration.

Both despondency and anxiety are sinful, for they are signs of deficient trust and faith.

Everything should be done in peace, as if we were in prayer; for when can we be rightly in an unprayerful spirit?

Everything that we see should lead us to some thought of God; no habit will do more to increase our holiness.

The most beautiful thing in the world is a soul full of the love of God, serving Jesus purely and men unselfishly.

If anyone were suddenly to ask us if what we are doing is for God could we answer promptly and honestly with a glad and hearty "Yes?"

Do we take as much pains with what we do in private, when only God sees, as with what we do in public before witnesses?

When we cannot justify people's actions we can often excuse their intentions, and so think pretty well of them after all. Yet, of course, if people are constantly blundering we cannot choose them for agents in responsible positions; to mean well and to do well are different things.

He who loves others as he loves himself or his child will be very slow to believe evil of them, and will only do it under the absolute compulsion of unquestionable facts.

Never let the mind dwell on things unpleasant, unless there is a prospect of thus making them better. Turn from annoyances to God.

As bread must be eaten with every meal, so Christ, who is the Bread of life, must be taken into association with every act.

Hurry and worry and flurry are never right; work done quietly and well will be done in time.

Avoid, if possible, all contradiction, and beware of disputation. Express your opinion with calmness; then leave it, not minding if others do not agree. But cultivate, of course, an inquiring turn of mind, and be always seeking for light from any that can give it.

It is very common to have too great an attachment to our own opinion; love of it and pride in it are generally the last things parted with.

The will of God is to be discerned, not by impressions only or mainly, but by Scripture, reason, providence, and the advice of judicious friends, united with, and acting as a check upon, such impressions as may be made directly upon our minds by the Holy Spirit.

The absolute will of God is frequently to be known only by the event which is its effect ; beforehand, we do what seems to us, all things considered, to be right.

Perfection is not a garment that we can find ready-made, so that we may at once put it on ; we have to construct it for ourselves day by day.

It is always in order to ask, with reference to a person who has a high reputation for goodness, "To what extent has he been tried, has he held office, has he been put where he was obliged to come into collision with the strong wills of other men?"

Be very guarded in letting your mind dwell on what other people say or think of you ; there is danger in it to our simplicity and humility and quietness of spirit.

Our exterior defects, which give trouble to others, should be reformed even more diligently than those which, being interior, only give trouble to ourselves.

Imitate the bee, rather than the beetle ; the

former lights upon the flowers, the latter upon the dirt.

It is commonly a sure sign of a person's being far from perfection that he thinks he has reached it; he has probably not yet begun to learn what it is. The more a man travels the more plainly he sees that he has advanced but little; the more he knows the more he sees how much he has still to acquire. It is only the ignoramus or the idiot who is sure that he knows it all.

"In every sin we commit there are two things: the one is, the motion, or exterior act; the other, the irregularity of the will, by which we transgress what the commandments of God prescribe. God is the cause and author of the first; man only is the cause and author of the second."—*Rodriguez*.

We must not stop to attack temptations directly, but simply look away to Jesus and pass straight on about our work. The little dogs who snarl at us will bark the more fiercely if we stop to drive them off.

We should always smile, because we have Jesus with us and no one can take him away.

Very few people ever have occasion to repent of being too merciful and charitable in their judgments.

Even the ungodly will sometimes give thanks

for blessings ; but only those who are very good will praise God for afflictions.

We must have conformity to the will of God, not only in our own sufferings, but in the sufferings of others and in public calamities.

If we would only cut off the one item of unprofitable conversation we should have leisure enough for devotional pursuits ; and if we omit, also, useless reading of the daily papers we shall have time in plenty for some real improvement of our mind.

He loves the Lord too little who loves anything with him which he loves not for him.

Patience is a twin sister of humility, because he who is properly humble and thoroughly conversant with his own faults will regard himself as deserving all the mortifications which come to him, and will not be disposed to resent them.

He who is humble and rates his merits low will, also, be easily thankful for every favor ; and he who is always thankful will be always happy.

He has the prime element of true greatness who is strongly exercised to deserve glory, but is careless as to its reception from men.

We are permitted to desire the esteem of men only when the desire is prompted purely by love for the glory of God and the edification of others.

We may rightly undertake great things for

God ; but it is easy to let a little fondness for human praise and personal credit step in.

All healthy Christians, subsequent to conversion, steadily approximate to complete accord with the divine nature.

No one can grow into holiness ; he must be born into it. But every child of God, being, by the fact of his new birth, in holiness, has it for his life task to grow continually therein.

To assert that the outward life is in no way different, whatever be the advance in inward holiness, or that there can be a holiness of heart which does not affect the practical life, is to foster a very dangerous error.

Since God is in every place, why should we not be reverent in our deportment everywhere, and not simply in church ?

Since God is in all his creatures, we should be careful how we treat them, abusing none.

Every time you hear the clock strike utter a short ejaculation of praise or prayer.

We are fully as much in peril when alone as when in company ; for the most dangerous enemy any man can have is self.

We cannot do God a greater wrong than to doubt his love.

A continual "Amen" in our hearts, a constant "Yes" to God, are a sweet privilege and a clear duty.

Since apparent ills are often real blessings, it is sometimes difficult to show proper sympathy with those who are suffering, without being untrue to our faith in God.

Our habitual demeanor should be so cheerful as to make it very manifest to all beholders that, with us, God's yoke is easy and his burden light.

We must think less of the duty to be fulfilled than of how we can keep close to God while fulfilling it; our hearts should be more engrossed with him than our hands with his work.

We cannot set aside discipline, but we may throw away all its healing grace; we cannot avoid suffering, but we may easily lose the discipline which God meant it to work for us.

The hearing of evil speech, without remonstrance or defense of the absent or a determined effort to change the conversation, is clearly a sin and puts us on a level with the evil speaker. The receiver is as bad as the thief.

It is better to do too much against self than too little; give the benefit of the doubt on that side.

We can best imitate our Lord Jesus Christ in his humiliation.

The only thing that really belongs to us is our will, and this God gave us that we might return it to him without reservation.

Many are willing to serve God if they can do it in their own way, rather than his; we mar the work of God by doing it in our own spirit.

There is such a thing as being too eager, even for good things; too much troubled, even at our failures in duty. God is not honored by our hurry and worry, or by our despondency and discouragement. Calmness and cheerfulness are always in order.

Whatever hinders our progress toward perfection must be resolutely sacrificed.

We must learn to expect but little from men, and yet not fail in proper honor for them and love to them.

A state of holy indifference, which is not inactivity or stupidity, is much further along than holy resignation.

Our business is to concur with God; his, alone to originate.

Beware of prematurely concluding that the process of inward crucifixion is absolutely complete, the abandonment to God without the slightest reservation.

To always submit our will to that of others in matters indifferent is good for us, but not good for them.

Sometimes it is a duty to submit to be thought in the wrong; but more commonly we should justify ourselves in some simple,

quiet way, for our reputation is too precious a thing, too essential to our usefulness, to be injured without good cause or necessity.

It is well usually to be silent concerning the wrongs and slights and contempts we meet with; brooding over them or seeking comfort for them from others is a weakness.

If men dislike us let us make sure it is for our adherence to principle, and not for our bad tempers and our selfishness and pride. Clubs and stones under a tree may be a proof that it contains chestnuts, or it may be a sign that hornets live there.

It is folly to measure our piety by the apparent success of our efforts in doing good to men.

Joys have been well classified as unnatural, natural, and supernatural. The second are often mistaken for the third; the third may be with us, though the second have departed.

Patient waiting is more difficult than active service, and is often more fruitful of abiding good.

The reality of God's guidance, which we have asked for expectantly and taken all available means to secure, must not be called in question because the results are not what we had hoped or expected, but seem to human wisdom more like failure than success.

If God had wished us to decide differently he could easily have brought to our notice the thoughts and considerations which would have so influenced us.

The Lord has promised that we shall know his will, not that we shall understand his way.

Communion with Jesus over common things gives a reality and gladness to everyday life that nothing else can.

A close, continual walk with God is the secret of present blessing and the condition of truest usefulness.

We may be so full of love that injury and reproach shall be answered by a sweetness that is without effort.

Seeing plainly the truth, that nothing can touch us except with the Father's knowledge and permission, has been well called "the only clew to a completely restful life."

Not many sufficiently realize that he who frets at events frets at God.

To reverence ourselves is more difficult and more important than to reverence the world.

Impatience always involves a want of submission and a want of love.

We must not allow our piety or devotion to be inconvenient to others if we can possibly help it.

If we would even retain what we have we must continually aim at getting more.

Virtues, like languages, are acquired with much labor, and quickly lost by idleness or disuse.

Thinking much and talking often about eternity, heaven, Jesus, will wonderfully quicken our zeal.

Faith is the faculty of spiritual touch—the faculty by which we realize unseen things; it is an openness of soul toward God.

Very rarely, indeed, is any action done from a single motive.

Nothing that concerns the happiness of any of God's creatures is small or insignificant in his sight.

The following are selected from Spurgeon's *Salt Cellars*—a large collection of proverbs and mottoes :

A true believer loves not the world, and yet he loves all the world.

Be not idle in the means, nor make an idol of the means.

Beware of hidings
Of heavenly tidings.

Clocks need weights, and men need troubles.

Even in light matters get light from heaven.

Even in small things there is a great providence.

Faith makes all things possible, and love makes them easy.

God conceals his purposes, that we may live on his promises.

He who is only half God's is wholly the devil's.

He will never go to heaven who is content to go alone, nor he who is not willing to go alone if need be.

He that wills to serve God for naught will find that he does not serve God for naught.

Hem your blessings with praise, lest they unravel.

In God's works we see his hand, but in his word his face.

If you have to swim the depth is of no consequence.

If God's mercies are not loadstones they will be millstones.

It is easier to build temples than to be temples.

Joys are our wings; sorrows are our spurs.

Live to God's glory, and you shall live in God's glory.

Not a leaf moves on the trees
Unless the Lord himself doth please.

One hour's cold will drive out seven years' heat.

Our love to God arises out of our want, his love to us out of his fullness.

Please God in all you do and be pleased with all he does.

Prayer should be pillared on promises and pinnacled with praises.

Sanctified affliction is spiritual promotion.

The loss of gold is great, the loss of health is more ;
But the loss of Christ is such a loss as no man can restore.

The minister's life is the life of his ministry.
To be much like Christ, be much with Christ.

When Christians are rusty
They are apt to turn crusty.

When we are in Satan's hand, he is in God's hand.

We must be self-searchers, but not self-seekers.

You cannot wrestle with God and wrangle with your neighbor.

Answer him not, lest he grow more hot ;
Answer him well, lest his pride should swell.

Bashful dogs get little meat.
Bravely take thy proper seat.

Birds can sing on a bare bough.
O believer, canst not thou ?

Better suffer a great wrong than do a little one.

For every evil beneath the sun
There is some remedy or none.
If there be one resolve to find it ;
If not, submit and never mind it.

He is a stupid who loses patience with a stupid.

He who receives a good turn should never forget it ; he who does one should never mention it.

Help those who help themselves, and those who cannot.

If the sun shines on me, what matters the moon?

If you cannot have the best make the best of what you have.

If cold, don't scold ; if warm, don't storm ;
if wet, don't fret ; if dry, don't cry.

It takes four living men to carry one dead man out of the house.

Live in to-day, but not for to-day.

Newspapers are the Bibles of worldlings.

Respect yourself, or no one else will respect you.

Take the world as it is, and try to make it what it ought to be.

The better thou be, the more careful must thou be.

The best of men are but men at the best.

The greatest of all faults is to be conscious of none.

To follow crowds but death I deem ;
The live fish swims against the stream.

Whichever way the wind doth blow,
Some heart is glad to have it so ;
Then blow it east or blow it west,
The wind that blows—that wind is best.

Who has no foes has earned no friends.

Wise men change their minds ; fools have none to change.

You must put up with a great deal if you would put down a great deal.

Zeal is like a fire—it needs both feeding and watching.

THE END.

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